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Mubarak Wants U.S. to Intervene to Stop Israel

CAIRO — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has said he will ask the United States to intervene to stop Israeli "provocation" and warned that threats of war could have negative consequences.

"There is no need for the war threats because they lead to counter reactions, unless we consider Netanyahu's government a cabinet of war," the *Al Ahram* newspaper quoted Mubarak as saying Tuesday during a visit to Tunisia.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Rafsanjani to Visit Turkey Soon

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will pay an official visit to Turkey soon, a Foreign Ministry official told the *Tehran Times* on condition of anonymity here yesterday.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey are members of ECO and have close relations.

Reyshahri: No Relations With America



REYSHAHRI

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Secretary General of the Society for Defending Values of the Islamic Revolution (SDVIR) Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Mohammadi Reyshahri told the *Tehran Times*, "As long as the U.S. maintains its hegemonic nature and continues to hatch plots against the Islamic Republic of Iran, we cannot establish friendly relations with that country."

Hojjatoleslam Reyshahri added that his group's stand has been taken in accordance with the view stressed by late Imam Khomeini and presently underlined by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

The hojjatoleslam added, "Basically, Iran's foreign policy has classified other countries in two categories. In the first category are the countries that do not hold a hostile attitude toward the Islamic government in Iran. According to the guidelines of the Holy Qoran, Iran should have cordial ties with those countries. Into the second category fall the countries that are taking subversive measures and devising evil schemes against the Islamic Republic of Iran."

"Presently, the countries falling into this category are the United States and the Zionist regime. By no means does the Holy Qoran allow establishing relations, whether overt or covert, with these countries," he noted.

In view of the fact that Reyshahri intends to stand in the next presidential election and consid-

(Contd on Pg.14)

Moscow Determined to Complete Bushehr Plant

MOSCOW — Russian Minister of Atomic Power, Victor Mikhailov here Tuesday stressed that his country is determined to complete the nuclear power plant in Bushehr, southern Iran, and to deliver the relevant reactors to Iran.

He made the remark in a meeting with the visiting Iranian Minister of Economic and Financial Affairs Morteza Mohammad-Khan which was held on the sidelines of Tehran-Moscow joint economic commission session.

Tehran-Moscow nuclear cooperation is in line with Iran's peaceful use of atomic energy, the Russian minister added.

According to the agreements reached between the two countries, Russia will continue its cooperation with the Islamic Republic on nuclear issues, he said.

Expressing satisfaction over the progress of work on Bushehr Atomic Power Plant, Mohammad-Khan reiterated Iran's peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Iran and Russia signed a 4800 million agreement about two years ago on completion of the Bushehr power plant.

(IRNA)

Velayati Winds Up Damascus Visit, Calls Talks Productive

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati who was in Syria to deliver a written message of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to his Syrian counterpart Hafiz al-Assad, returned home early Wednesday morning.

Velayati who had arrived in Damascus on Monday met with President Hafiz al-Assad and the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs Farouq al-Shara.

The latest regional and international developments as well as further promotion of Tehran-Damascus ties were discussed in the meetings.

In a meeting with President Assad on Tuesday he referred to foreign pressures and the Zionist plots and underlined the need to strengthen cooperation between Iran and Syria. The Syrian president stressed this cooperation will help establishment of peace and tranquility in the whole region.

Both the Syrian president and the Iranian foreign minister condemned foreign intervention in domestic affairs of Iraq and denounced any measure aimed at violation of Iraq's territorial integrity.

Meanwhile, the Syrian president stressed the need to support the Islamic Resistance in South Lebanon to confront the Zionist aggressions and to defend the Lebanese territory.

VELAYATI

During the meeting it was also announced that a delegation led by Syrian Vice President Abdulhalim Khaddam will pay a visit to Iran soon to take part in the session of Joint Tehran-Damascus Cooperation Committee.

Velayati also said that Iran, as in the past, supports aspiration of the Palestinian nation and the Islamic Resistance in their struggle against the Zionist regime.

Calling for a united action by the Islamic states to foil conspiracies of enemies, Velayati said that Tehran-Damascus close cooperation will lead to establishment of regional peace and tranquility.

Prior to his departure the Iranian foreign minister told reporters that his visit was highly fruitful. He added that there is full cooperation and coordination between Iran and Syria.

On military cooperation between Israel and Turkey, Velayati said this collaboration is detrimental to the interests of all regional states.

(IRNA)

UN Says It Is Powerless to Stop Bosnia-Wide Ethnic Cleansing

SARAJEVO — The United Nations on Wednesday reported an "upsurge in evictions" taking place across Bosnia, as the London conference reviewing Bosnia's Dayton peace plan got under way.

For the third day running aid workers reported illegal evictions of Muslims from the southern city of Mostar, said UN spokesman Alex Ivanko.

And attacks on ethnic minorities are now common across Bosnia and practiced by Croats and Serbs, he said.

"We have seen an upsurge of evictions, for example Bosanski Gradusa, Dubrava, Teslic, Mostar," said Ivanko. "Minorities are being harassed at a level probably not seen this year. There's very little the international community can do."

The Dayton Peace Treaty signed one year ago committed Bosnia's three ethnic groups — Croats, Muslims and Serbs — to stop fighting and build a re-integrated country. But the United Nations said the reverse was now taking place, with ethnic minorities coming under attack.

"There has been virtually no return of minorities to areas controlled by their former foes and this is because this return is totally blocked by the authorities," said Kris Janowski, of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

"The evictions provide a fairly ugly background to the London conference."

He said there had been two more reports of evictions of Muslims in Croat-held areas of west Mostar, scene of bitter fighting between all three sides during the Bosnian war.

Meanwhile, the commander of Croat forces during Bosnia's civil war, General Tihomir Blaskic, pleaded not guilty Wednesday to a new set of charges at the UN war crimes tribunal in the Hague.

The prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICT) had earlier Wednesday released the new

(Contd on Pg.14)

UN: Iran Acts to Prevent Sanctions-Busting

UNITED NATIONS — Iran has informed the United Nations that it is acting to prevent its territorial waters from being used to illegally smuggle oil from sanctions-hit Iraq, the head of a UN sanctions committee said Tuesday.

According to a letter from Iran's UN mission discussed by the committee on Tuesday, 12 ships were impounded by Iranian authorities between March 1993 and 1994 in connection with the smuggling, nine between March 1994 and March 1995, and five between March 1995 and 1996.

"Many forged manifests with the Iranian emblem have been discovered in these vessels," the letter said.

The mission told the committee that Iran had "done its best tc prevent the violation of sanctions against Iraq in terms of using the Iranian flag and territorial waters."

(Contd on Pg.14)

Hatami Leaves for Eternal Abode

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Ali Hatami, the outstanding Iranian film director, leaves for the eternal abode after suffering from a prolonged period of illness.

He was directing a serial on the Iranian wrestling champion, Gholam Reza Takhti, when he was hospitalized due to his illness.

His funeral procession will be held today starting at 9 a.m. at Vahdat Hall.



Director of the admired films, *Kamal-ul-Molk*, *Mother*, *Delshodegan* and the Iranian TV serial of *Hezar-Dastan*, Hatami contributed a great share in the introduction of genuine traditional Iranian culture in an Islamic atmosphere.

The *Tehran Times* condoles the Iranian Artists Society and his bereaved family on his sad decease. May God Bless his soul.

Countdown Starts for Iraq's Return to Oil Market

BAGHDAD — The countdown started Wednesday for Iraq's return to the international oil market as UN experts visited the border with Turkey for the last technical inspection before the launch of the oil-for-food deal.

"We are at the last stage of the inspection of technical installations in Iraq," a UN official in Baghdad told AFP, just days ahead of the arrival of UN monitors to be deployed at pumping stations in northern and southern Iraq.

Two oil experts from the Dutch company Saybolt visited the Kurdish-held northern Iraqi town of Zakho on the Turkish border on Wednesday to inspect

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TEHRAN TIMES

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In the Name of Allah

And Allah's are the best names, therefore call on Him thereby, and leave alone those who violate the sanctity of His names; they shall be recompensed for what they did.
(HOLY QORAN) (7:180)

OPINION

Iran, Crucial Trade Link Between Russia and Asia

The first Irano-Russian Joint Economic Commission which began in Moscow on Monday will wind up tomorrow. It is the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union that the commission meets.

Although there is a political will on the part of the leadership of both countries to expand bilateral trade ties, the present level of Iranian-Russian trade cooperation is not satisfactory. In 1994 armament exports from Russia to Iran totalled $104 million and those of industrial equipment and services, $333 million.

Iran has already expressed readiness to bring its purchases of Russian machinery and military hardware to $1 billion in approximately one year. Russia's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Economic Relations Minister, Oleg Davydov, has said that Russia will increase its exports of industrial equipment and armaments to Iran to $4 billion within the next 10 years.

Although Moscow and Tehran have already signed several contracts for construction in Iran, with a total of $2 billion, with Russia due to invest 80 percent of the capital, the volume of trade between Iran and Russia is to the satisfaction of neither Tehran nor Moscow.

Besides political will on the part of the leadership of both countries, there are ample potentials for preparing a congenial ground for boosting Iranian-Russian trade ties. Then how is it that the volume of trade between the two countries is extremely limited?

One explanation might be that the two sides have little knowledge of the potentials and opportunities which exist in this regard.

Hence the public and private sectors of both countries should now explore avenues for materializing the political will that already exists for enhancing mutual transactions.

Fortunately, Moscow has proven to be Tehran's reliable partner by not giving in to U.S. pressure. Iran is a crucial link between Russia and Asian countries. Expansion of ties between Tehran and Moscow will undoubtedly prepare the groundwork for a more dynamic cooperation between Russia and other Asian countries.

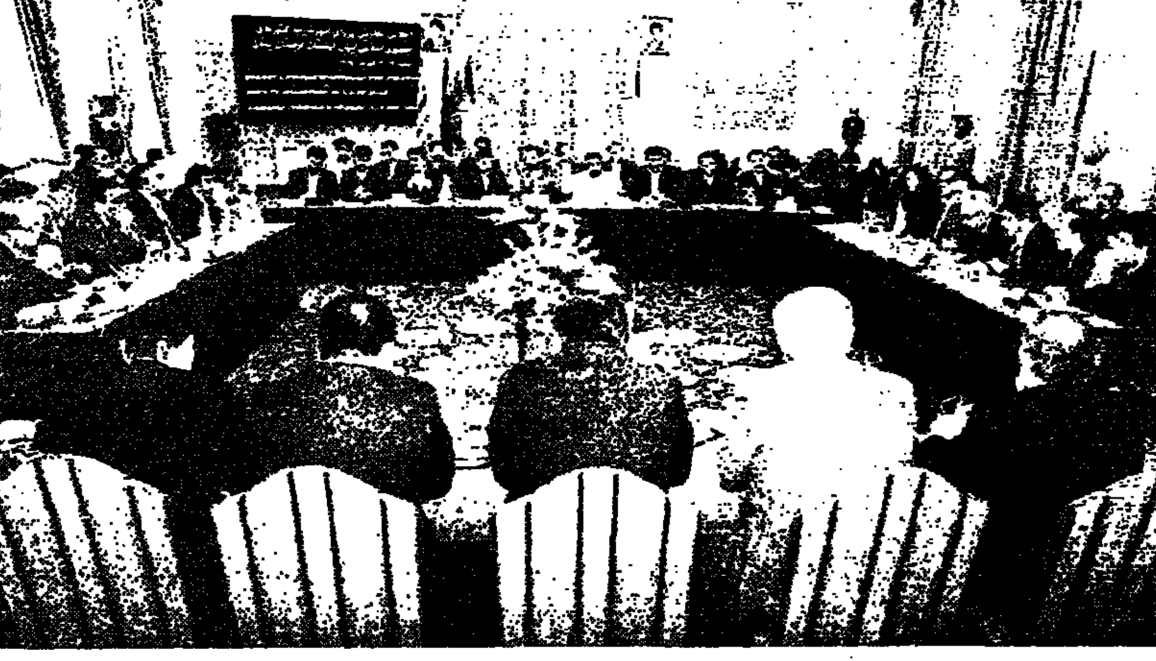
Chemically Wounded War Veterans File Complaint Against Germany

TEHRAN — Over 1,000 Iranian chemically wounded war veterans have filed complaints against Germany and about 80 German chemical companies, which helped the Iraqi regime build chemical weapons during its eight-year long imposed war (1980-88) on Iran.

Acting Head of the Mostazafan and Janbazan Foundation (MJF) Hossein Zarifmanesh said here on Wednesday that the chemical victims' decision to file law suits against Germany goes back to several years ago and now their decision has been translated into action.

Zarifmanesh said that over 1,000 war veterans disabled as a result of Iraqi chemical weapons supplied by the German companies have referred their case to a special branch established at the Justice Ministry.

In view of the establishment of the new branch at the Justice Ministry, thousands more complaints are expected to be filed with the branch in the future, he said. (IRNA)



TEHRAN (DEC. 4) — Deputy foreign ministers from Iran, Greece, Armenia and Georgia attend the closing ceremony of their first quadrilateral meeting. The meeting which was opened on Tuesday aimed at strengthening political, economic and cultural relations among the above countries.
Photo: Abbas Kowsari

FM Official Terms Claims of Diplomatic Defections 'Baseless'

TEHRAN — A Foreign Ministry source here on Tuesday night dismissed as "baseless" the claims that the Iranian ambassador to Tajikistan and some other Iranian diplomats have defected to foreign countries.

The source told IRNA, "Ali Ashraf Mojtahed Shabestari, the Iranian ambassador to Dushanbe, has returned to Tehran following the end of his 5-year tenure in Tajikistan."

He said the enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran were trying to circulate such rumors on the heels of the allegations leveled against Iran by the German prosecutor general and the baseless report of human rights violation in Iran at the United Nations.

"Such vain attempts to tarnish the image of Islamic Iran will like all previous attempts end in failure," said the Foreign Ministry source. (IRNA)

Besharati: Iran Supports Good Neighborliness in Persian Gulf

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Interior Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati here Wednesday said that the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to strengthening of good Neighborliness and preserving the security of the Persian Gulf region.

Speaking at a press conference upon his return from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Besharati said that during his stay in the UAE he submitted a message from President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to the UAE's Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa ibn Zayed al-Nahyan.

The interior minister underlined that the visiting Iranian delegation exchanged views with some 22 high-ranking delegations from other countries on the sideline of the ceremonies marking the 30th anniversary of the ruling of Sheik Khalifa ibn Zayed al-Nahyan.

Besharati reiterated that the visiting Iranian delegation conferred with UAE's officials on the expansion of economic and political ties between the two countries.

Elaborating on the ways to resolve misunderstandings between the two countries, the interior minister emphasized that the existing misunderstandings over Iranian Islands in the Persian Gulf should be ironed out only through peaceful negotiations.

Referring to the importance of the security in the region, Besharati pointed out that the UAE's officials welcomed the maintenance of the security of the Persian Gulf region.

Besharati emphasized on Iran's sovereignty over the three Iranian islands of Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunbs in the Persian Gulf saying that during his meeting with the UAE's officials, he voiced Iran's readiness to remove the misunderstandings which exist in this regard.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, the Iranian interior minister paid a visit to the United Arab Emirates to participate in the ceremonies on the 25th anniversary of the UAE's formation.

Bill on Banning Use of Foreign Terms Set Forth in Majlis

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The bill on banning the use of foreign names, titles, and expressions was presented in Tuesday's open session of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis).

According to the bill, approved in the second advisory debate by the majority of parliamentarians, all the legislative, executive and judicial organizations, as well as companies and organs affiliated with the government, are obliged to refrain from the use of foreign terms in their reports, speeches, official interviews and letters.

The bill suggests that the Persian Language Cultural Center, with the collaboration of other language research centers, should make appropriate Persian equivalences for foreign terms used in the Persian language.

The bill underlines that all factories, workshops, productive units and commercial centers which carry foreign names should change their names into Persian within one year after the law came into effect.

Iran, Uzbekistan to Expand Cultural, Scientific Ties

TASHKENT — Iran and Uzbekistan signed an agreement here Tuesday for expansion of cultural relations.

The agreement was reached during a meeting between Uzbek Deputy Minister of Culture, Kozyrev, and visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Research and Education Affairs, Abbas Maleki.

Maleki, who is in Uzbekistan to attend the opening ceremony of an exhibition of manuscripts and royal edicts relating to the Timurid Era (14th-15th century), said Iran attaches special importance to Uzbekistan as a country with deep historical and cultural ties with Iran.

He also voiced Iran's readiness to contribute to the ceremonies marking the 2,500th anniversary of the Central Asian cities of Bukhara and Khiva which are in modern Uzbekistan.

Maleki also pointed out that Iran is planning to open classes of Uzbek language at Iranian universities and is ready to help boost Persian language courses in that country's universities.

He also expressed Iran's willingness to cooperate with Tashkent in publication of works of scholars who are well known cultural figures in both the countries such as the famous poet and scholar Amir Shir Ali Navaie, who wrote fluently in Persian as well as his native language Chaghtai Turkish, and served as minister to the Timurid king of Khurasan Sultan Hussain Bayqara.

Modern Persian which was actually revived in the court of the Samanid kings of Bukhara over a thousand years ago, is still spoken in parts of modern Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries.

Meanwhile, the Uzbek deputy minister of culture appreciated Iran's initiative in setting up the Timurid exhibition, and said Uzbekistan is determined to promote ties with Iran in all fields notably in the cultural domain. (IRNA)

Iranian Ambassador Presents Credentials to Swedish King

BONN — Iran's newly-appointed Ambassador to Sweden, Abdollah Nowrouzi, handed over his credentials to Swedish King Carl Gustaf in a meeting in Stockholm on Tuesday.

During their meeting, Gustaf and Nowrouzi discussed various subjects including recent developments in Iran in the fields of culture, education and construction works.

Nowrouzi also briefed the Swedish king on Iran's unsparing efforts in the interests of regional peace and security, and said that Iran is hosting the largest number of refugees in the world.

The two sides also underscored the necessity of further promotion of bilateral ties.

In a separate meeting in Stockholm on Tuesday, the Iranian ambassador held talks with Swedish Foreign Minister Ms. Lena Hjelm Wallen.

The two sides called for expansion of bilateral ties and stressed on continuation of the constructive talks between the Islamic Republic and the European Union.

Iran-Sweden cooperation at international forums was also discussed. (IRNA)

YAZD — The visiting Hungarian delegation led by the country's deputy minister of agriculture, Zoltan Kiss wraped up its two-day visit to Yazd following the signing on Monday of a pact declaring Iranian city of Yazd and Jasyrin city in Hungary as sister cities.

8,500 kg of Narcotic Drugs Seized

TEHRAN — A total of 8,545 kg of varying kinds of narcotics was seized from 20 drug distributing gangs in the Iranian month of Aban (October 22-November 21).

Public Relations Department of the Law Enforcement Forces reported here on Wednesday that the drugs, including 7,522 kg of opium, 222 kg of hashish, 75 kg of morphine and 40 kg of heroin, were confiscated from drug dealers in the course of 60 operations in various parts of the country.

Some 81 vehicles and 17 motorcycles were also seized from the traffickers, the report added. (IRNA)

Secretary of Indonesia's Human Rights Commission Meets Yazdi

TEHRAN — Head of Iran's Judiciary Ayatollah Yazdi told visiting Secretary of Indonesia's Human Rights Commission Professor Bahareddin Lupa here Tuesday that Islam offers the best universal laws for protection of the human rights.

He said the Holy Qoran considers all humans as having the same human dignity. He added the present-day world looks at the human rights as a political tool, having denied many humans of part of their God-given rights.

Ayatollah Yazdi told the visiting Indonesian official that the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations is under the influence of political considerations.

In the same meeting, the secretary of Indonesia's national human rights commission who is also chancellor of Az-Zahra University in Jakarta, offered a brief summary of the civil and criminal procedure in Jakarta. (IRNA)

Bank Confirms Improvement in Iran's External Accounts

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran's liabilities to Western commercial banks dropped for the second successive quarter in 1996, while the country's assets reached a new all-time high, according to the Basle-based Bank of International Settlement (BIS).

The fall in liabilities to OECD reporting banks of $573 million to $10.35 billion in June follows a similar decrease from $11.6 billion during the first quarter, IRNA reported.

The rise in assets of $97million to $2.9 billion at the end of the second quarter, though less substantial, represents another record high and comes after quarterly increases averaging some $500 million since 1994.

The improved performance in Iran's external accounts supports Bank Markazi's own reports. In July a separate BIS report confirmed that Iran also fulfilled its payment obligations in 1995 and showed a dramatic reduction in short-term debts.

Speaking in London last month, the Vice-Governor of Iran's Central Bank, Ahmad Azizi, said that the country's strategic reserves were enough to finance seven months of imports.

He also expected Iran's trading account to show a surplus of $2.5 billion for the first half of the current fiscal year beginning March 21, compared to an earlier report estimating a surplus of $1.8 billion.

Expansion of Iran-Russia Industrial Cooperation Discussed

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - In a meeting in Moscow on Tuesday between Iranian Minister of Economy and Financial Affairs, Morteza Mohammad Khan, and Russian Minister of Industry, Bas Paulov, bilateral cooperation in the fields of industry and technical affairs was discussed.

The Russian minister expressed the readiness of his country to cooperate with Iran in the fields of machinery, construction, road-building and power plant projects, IRNA reported.

He added that Iran and Russia could enter into extensive cooperation in the petrochemical industries. He also said that Russia could contribute to completion of the Tehran subway project.

Mohammad Khan, in Moscow to attend the first Iran-Russia Joint Economic Commission, welcomed the proposals put forward by the Russain official and briefed him on the achievements of the First Five-Year Development Plan of Iran (1989-94).

Mohammad Khan said that petrochemical output during the first 5- year plan rose from 400,000 tons a year to one million tons, a figure which is expected to reach 30 million tons in the next decade.

He also said that Iran, which imported up to 4 million tons of steel at the beginning of the first 5-year plan, is exporting one million tons of steel every year from its annual output of six million tons (1995 figure) after meeting its domestice needs, and has plans to increase steel production to 15 millon tons in the next ten years.

During the meeting, opitimization of industrial production of the two countries and cooperation in the petrochemical substance of PVC were reviewed.

The Tehran-Moscow Joint Economic Commission is the first since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Tehran Airport to Be Equipped With Modern Radar Installations

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Head of Iranian Civil Aviation Organization Ali Shahcheraghi said here on Wednesday that installation of modern radar system would be completed in the enxt two weeks at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport.

Speaking at a press conference, Shahcheraghi said the new radar system is capable of bringing all airplanes flying within 400 kms under its control, IRNA reported.

He said $20 million has been spent on installing the new radar system.

With commissioning of the new radar system, safety and speed of flights would improve substantially and the Civil Aviation Organization would gain more incomes, he said.

He said 50 other new avaition control systems would be set up in other Iranian airports to monitor and guide airplanes flying in the airspace of Iran. Another $30 million has also been spent on procurement of modern air control devices, he said.

He said a 38 meter high control tower has been built at a total expense of Rls.10 billion at Mehrabad Airport in Tehran for the new radar installation.

Shahcheraghi said $16 million has been spent on modern devices for Shiraz control tower, the installation of which is due to be finished by the year end on March 20, 1997.

Asked about the revenues of Iranian Civil Aviation Organization from giving services to international airliners, he said that such services have earned the organization $80 million in the past eight months and that it is expected to reach $140 million by the year end.

President: Impacts of Great Services of Insurance Industry Is All-Encompassing and Visible



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani underlined the significance and basic role of the insurance industry in the economy and social welfare of the country, stressing the need for a greater cultural work for the popular acceptance and expansion of insurance.

President Rafsanjani made the statement on the occasion of the Day of Insurance and addressing the managers and officials of the Central Insurance Corporation.

Rafsanjani added that the expansion of the insurance industry in society and the people's investment in various insurances in recent years indicate the confidence and trust of the people in this industry.

The president stressed the participation of private and government sectors in the insurance industry.

Meanwhile, the head of Iran Central Insurance (ICI) presented an account in which he said last year 600 billion rials of damages have been paid by the ICI, adding that the figure is predicted to reach 900 billion rials by the end of the current year. He added that investment in insurance industry has increased 45 percent, and estimated that investment in this industry will reach 2,240 billion rials by 1998.

Vice President Receives Zimbabwe's Minister

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - First Vice President of Iran Hassan Habibi told visiting Industries and Commerce Minister of Zimbabwe Nathan Shamira here Tuesday that the Islamic Republic had consistently advocated development of relations with Third World countries and especially with Africa.

He said a recent visit to a number of African countries by Iran's President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was proof of the attachment Iran placed on the African countries, IRNA reported.

Habibi said the oppressor world governments exploited such topics as the human rights as a device for imposing their own will on ther nations.

Tuesday Deals of TSE

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - A total of 1,495,582 shares, worth over Rls.6.9 billion, were traded for 566 applicants in 1,116 turns at the Tehran Stock Market(TSE) on Tuesday.

In Tuesday's dealings, the share prices of 18 companies increased while those of 43 others suffered decline.

The general price index for tradings stood at 2019.15 points, showing a drop of 20.78 points compared to the figure on monday.

Technology Advancements Boosting Non-OPEC Oil Production

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Technological innovations are attributed for much of the surge in non-OPEC oil production over the past 10 years, which is expected to continue mainly due to offshore development.

Non-OPEC costs have been slashed by advanced techniques for discovering, developing and producing oil and will help to boost output further over the next few years, according to three new reports, IRNA reported.

In a review of global offshore prospects, the International Energy Agency says that new opportunities have been opened that would have not been economic or possible a decade ago.

It predicted strong growth for non-OPEC production over the next three years, with offshore fields expected to account for 80 percent, out of which almost one third coming from the North Sea.

The London-based Center for Global Studies pointed to new developments such as horizontal drilling and 3D and 4D seismic surveying techniques that have revolutionized production possibilities.

Although development costs in the Middle East averaging just 59 cents per barrel remain a fraction, the fall in the North Sea to 4.07 dollars per barrel and to 3.37 DPB in North America has meant many small and inaccessible fields are now economic, it said.

According to Cambridge Energy Research, technology will allow the development of 19 million barrels per day of new capacity by 2000 in fields that have already been discovered, three-quarters of which was attributed to 3D seismic imaging.

Minister Calls for Cooperation Among Iran, Russia, China India

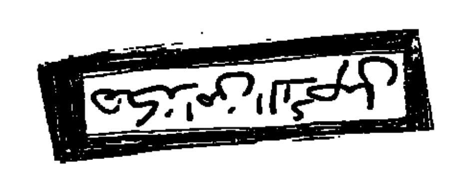
Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iranian Minister of Economy Morteza Mohammad Khan in a meeting in Moscow Tuesday with Russian Minister of Foreign Economic Relations Oleg Davidov underlined the importance of expansion of cooperation among Iran, Russia, China and India.

He noted that these four countries which combined together account for over half of the world's population, could make use of their rich resources and high economic capabilities in the making of a great regional union, IRNA reported.

On ways and means of long-term economic and commercial relations between Iran and Russia, he suggested that a special accord should be signed to boost bilateral economic exchanges up to several billions of dollars.

Mohammad Khan is in Moscow for the first Iran-Russia Joint Economic Commission.



Egypt to Restore Film Industry to Former Glory

CAIRO — Two private film production enterprises backed by a 300 million dollar investment are ready to roll in a bid to revitalize Egypt's stagnant film industry, once a pioneer in the Arab world.

Their creation marks the latest stage in the privatization of the heavily-nationalized sector, celebrating its centenary this year at the Cairo International Film Festival.

Saad Eddin Wahba, president of the film festival, said the project would give Egypt its first major private production companies which also specialize in film distribution and marketing.

Although small private film production companies already exist in Egypt — which gave the Arab world its first film in 1919 — their activities are very limited and they depend on government-run studios for their work.

Egypt is entering only two films at Cairo's festival, which opened Monday and runs to December 15, although the gala features several events paying tribute to Egyptian cinema since the first film was screened here in 1896.

A total of 20 Arab and international films are vying for the Golden Pyramid — Egypt's answer to the Oscars — at the festival, now in its 20th year.

Wahba said the new companies have been set up with the participation of two state-run banks — the national bank of Egypt and MISR Bank — as well as a group of investors and film industry producers.

But before they get off the ground, the companies, which each have a capital of half a billion pounds ($150 million), want approval to able to sell shares on the stock market.

The two banks each hold 20 percent of the capital while private investors have 35 percent and film producers 15 percent and the remaining shares are expected to float on the bourse.

Wahba said the businesses are also awaiting parliamentary approval of a law exempting them from customs duties on imported equipment and a decision allowing them to buy land at low prices to build their studios.

Within the next two months Parliament is also due to adopt a new law on tax exemptions which Wahba said will open the door to "major changes in the next five years."

The government opened up the film industry at the start of the year with the sale of 44 movie theaters and three studios.

But when the new companies announced their intention to go private about three months ago they raised a storm of protest from supporters of the government monopoly who feared that foreigners would take over the Egyptian industry and undermine its quality.

Wahba dismissed these concerns, saying it was vital to renovate the film industry both in terms of the quality of studios and equipment to produce better films which would attract bigger audiences and generate greater box office takings.

"What counts is the production, because if it is bad no one will go to the cinema," he said.

Egypt's film industry was in its heyday in the 1940s when up to 100 films were produced each year. But since it was nationalized in the 1960s under the then president, the late Gamal Abdel Nasser, the number of films fell, reaching a paltry 15 this year.

Revenues of the state-run MISR Company, which currently monopolizes the film industry, plunged to seven million pounds (about $2.5 million) in 1994 from 22 million pounds (seven million dollars) in 1992.

Wahba blamed the decline in production on "obsolete equipment which makes for bad movies that have poor sound and picture quality."

According to a recent parliamentary report the number of moviegoers in Egypt has shrunk by 70 percent since the 1980s.

One film producer pointed to the steep taxes on cinema tickets, with up to 40 percent of the price of between seven and 15 pounds (two to five dollars) *going straight into* government coffers.

(AFP)

At the Movies: '101 Dalmatians'

NEW YORK —Leave it to Disney to put a different spin on a beloved classic, especially when the classic is a Disney product.

The mouse factory's new take on its 1961 animated hit *"101 Dalmatians"* is a feature-length, live-action movie starring Glenn Close and 230 of the cutest spotted fur beasties you've ever seen.

How does the new version hold up to the original? Well, how does frozen yogurt compare to ice cream? The original is rich and creamy, while the imitator is, well, sweet and not bad for you.

Though not one of Disney's best artistic efforts, the animated version of *"101 Dalmatians"* was still cute, warm, funny and fast-paced. It made the evil Cruella de Vil, who kidnapped Dalmatian puppies so she could turn them into a fur coat, a legend among villains.

Commemoration Ceremony of Bozorgmehr

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — On the occasion of the 10th death anniversary of the great Farsi-English translator, Manuchehr Bozorgmehr, a commemoration ceremony was held here yesterday in Andisheh Cultural House.

According to a fax received by the daily, the ceremony attended by prominent writers and men of letter, surveyed works of the late famous translator.

During the ceremony Dr. Ezzatollah Fooladvand, Dr. Zia Movahhed and Dr. Gholam Ali Haddad Adel gave lectures on 'Bozorgmehr and New Philosophy in Iran', 'Bozorgmehr and Translation of Works on Interpretive Philosophy', and 'Bozorgmehr's Scientific Personality' respectively.

Also some university students, writers, translators and people interested in science and art were present in the ceremony.

Characterization in Screenplay

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — 'Characterization in Screenplay' was the subject of the 6th specialized gathering of screenwriting, held here yesterday in Andisheh Hall.

The gathering focused on characterization of protagonist and antagonist in a screenplay.

Screening selections of some films, a survey of the history of screenwriting in Iran entitled 'rural thinking, urban thinking' critique session and screening a movie were also on the menu of the gathering.

"Sreenwriting Night" is a monthly program sponsored by Screenwriting Workshop-School and attended by writers, film directors and cinema students.

Supplication of Kumayl

(5)

disgrace me through the hidden things
You know of my secrets and
not to hasten me to punishment
for what I have done in private:
my evil acts in secrecy, my misdeeds,
my continuous negligence, my ignorance,
my manifold passions and my forgetfulness,
And by Your Might, O Allah,
be kind to me in all states and
be gracious to me in all affairs!
My Allah and my Lord!
Have I any but You from whom to ask
remedy of my affliction
and regard for my affairs?
My Allah and my Protector!
I have myself given a decree against me,
I followed the caprice of my own soul and
did not defend myself from my enemy,
which deluded me through my soul's caprice
and therein destiny favored it.
So I crossed some of the barriers and
transgressed some of Your statutes and
disobeyed some
of Your commands.

British Art Collector Embarrasses Government With Terms of Bequest

LONDON — A wealthy art collector has embarrassed the British government by saying be will only leave 70 priceless paintings to local galleries if they pledge never to sell any of the works they own.

Bachelor Sir Denis Mahon, 86, a member of the merchant banking family of Guinness Mahon, has implied that he would even send the Italian Baroque pictures back to Italy if the terms are not accepted.

Mahon has decided to will 61 of the paintings to London's National Gallery, with the remainder going to provincial museums. But according to the British press their ownership will be invested in a charity, the National Art Collection Fund, which will have the right to remove them.

Such action would be prompted by the sale of publicly-owned works of art or even a further diminution in the government's shrinking arts budget.

Mahon did not appreciate a cut in last month's budget in the allocation for purchases of works of art from eight million to five million pounds (12 million to 7.5 million dollars).

He has also campaigned against the introduction of entry fees by cash-strapped national museums.

Culture Minister Virginia Bottomley invited Mahon for "a little chat" on the matter, but he replied that he was off to Italy and she would have to wait.

The paintings are by such masters as Domenichino and Guerchino of the 16th century Italian school, which is poorly represented in British galleries partly because the Victorian arbiter of taste John Ruskin did not like it.

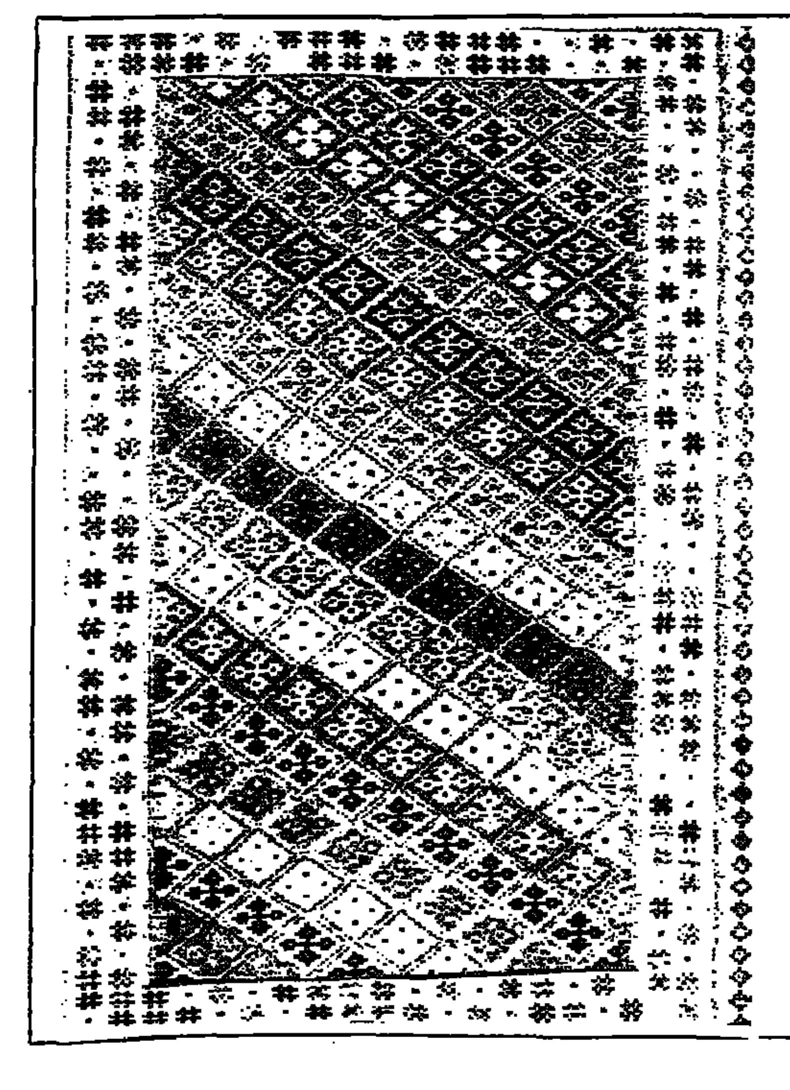
(AFP)

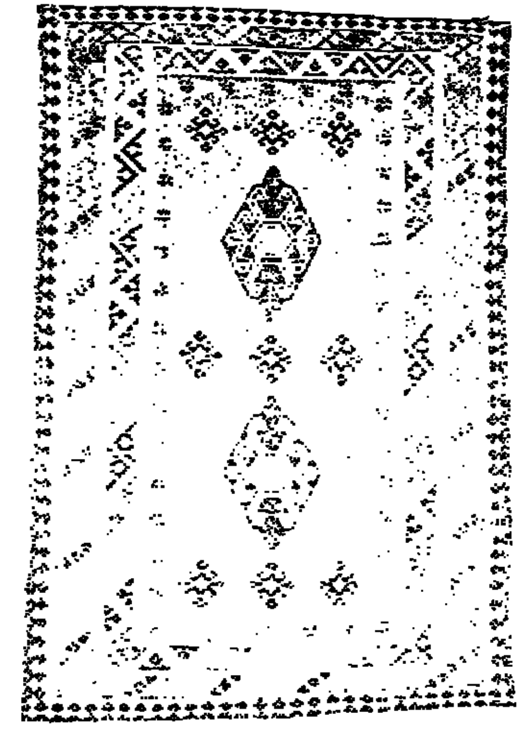
Daily Food for Thought

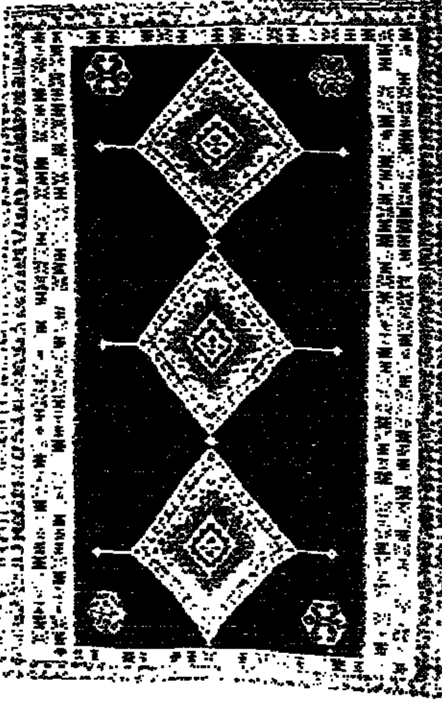
On Ability

Every person is responsible for only the good within his abilities, and for no more, and no one can tell whose sphere is the largest.

GAIL HAMILTON
Country Living and Country Thinking









Today, Dec.15, the beautiful park of Jamshidiyeh in northern Tehran, is host to the nomadic tribes of Takht-e Jamshid area. Ghashghaei nomadic people, Basseri, Inaanlou, etc. have gathered together to take you to the fantastic world of art; they are here to accompany the visitors to the world of heart, sight and hand. Let us take the opportunity and rush to the park to see the manifestation of rich history and culture of a region of Iran, the land of arts, glazing in the works of art by Ghashghaeis.

stry

Supplication

Saudis Lead Battle to Defend Arab Honor

DUBAI — Saudi Arabia's Portuguese coach Nelo Vingada is convinced his side can halt the Asian invasion when his side meets Thailand in their opening Asian Cup Group B match here today.

Defending champions Japan (Group C) and South Korea (Group A) are firm favorites and Thailand, although almost failing to qualify for the championship, will be no pushovers as the Saudi squad attempt to bring the cup back to the Persian Gulf.

Although Vingada's preparations were hampered by the absence of six of his top players because of club committments, he remains confident of opening with a win.

"That is the most important thing," he stressed. "That will motivate the team's morale for the next match."

Vingada is pleased with the blend of his team.

"The Saudi team is a mixture of good experienced players, of Olympic talent, and youth," he said.

"The average age of the team is 22 and although we could perhaps do with some more experience, the Saudi team in general can excel in any conditions," he added.

The success of top Saudi club Al Hilal, who recently beat Japan's Nagoya Grampus in the Asian Clubs League Championship final, has proved a major boost for his side.

"Al Hilal's win proved that Saudi football can fight and win at any level," said Vingada.

While Saudi Arabia have won the Asian Cup twice, in 1984 and 1988, Thailand have yet to make the final but coach Tanatshai believes this could be the year his side will make their mark in the tournament.

"We have worked hard during the last three years. Now we are number four in the Asian rankings and 50th in the FIFA rankings. This shows how much we have developed," said Tanatshai.

The Thais will be fully put to the test in what is one of the toughest groups in the championship with Iran and Iraq making up the four.

Iranian coach Mohammad Mayeli-Kohan gives short shrift to critics who doubt his team can repeat Iran's triple Asian Cup success in 1968, 1972 and 1976.

"If we were not confident of winning we would not have bothered to have come here," he said.

But Mayeli-Kohan; who took control of the side only nine months ago, admits that the standard of Iranian football has declined since the glory years in the late sixties and early seventies.

"We were affected by the war. The players were not able to train and the conditions during that phase were not favorable to promote or develop the game. Only now has Iranian football started to make its mark in the Asian scene," said Mayeli-Kohan.

"I hope the old glitter will return to Iranian football soon," he added.

The joker team in the group is Iraq, who will be without their top striker Ahmed Radi and midfield General Habib Jaffer — both injured.

"It is a great blow but our young players are equally talented," stresses coach Yahya Alwan.

Alwan admits a good run in the cup is of major importance to his country.

"Due to UN imposed sanctions people in the Persian Gulf haven't seen much of our team. This tournament will give us the opportunity to parade our impeccable talent. We have a lot at stake, more than the Asian Cup finals" he said.

As for going all the way, alwan modestly replied: "We are optimistic." (AFP)

Inter March Into UEFA Quarterfinals

PORTO, Portugal — Inter Milan sailed into the quarterfinals of th UEFA Cup on Tuesday night, following up their 5-1 home win over Boavista with a convincing 2-0 victory here.

Frenchman Youri Djorkaeff opened the scoring with a clinically taken 12th minute penalty and England's Paul Ince rifled home the second in the 66th minute.

It was just reward for Roy Hodgson's men, as Djorkaeff's creative skills and a combination of Ince's tenacity and passing ability were decisive in a hard-fought 90 minutes.

Boavista started brightly enough and a long ball caught the Inter defense flat-footed after just six minutes, but Jimmy's wild angled shot soared over the bar from a dozen yards.

However, as in the first leg at San Siro, Inter soon had a helping hand from Boavista's error-prone goalkeeper Alfredo — after he needlessly felled marco branca in the area.

Djorkaeff, whose 90th minute penalty earned Inter a 2-2 draw against Cagliari on Saturday, made no mistake with the spot-kick, firing low into the right hand corner as Alfredo dived to the left.

Inter keeper Gianluca Pagliuca was soon in action at the other end as a series of shots rained in from Jimmy, Sergio Duarte and Nuno Gomes, while Branca and Djorkaeff continued to cause trouble for the Portuguese.

Branca and Ince linked up twice in front of goal within minutes of the start of the second half, but the England midfielder arrived late for Branca's low cross and the Italian's first time volley went narrowly wide.

Boavista hit back and Jimmy went closer still with a skimming header, but the killer blow came soon afterwards. (AFP)

sh Art Collector Emb

ment With Terms of

Race Is On to Replace Italy's Sacchi

ROME — The man who steps into Arrigo Sacchi's shoes as the next Italy soccer coach is unlikely to be either the first or the most popular choice.

A poll of more than 1,000 Italians of voting age showed on Tuesday that Bayern Munich coach Giovanni Trapattoni was the man most people wanted to see sitting on the bench.

He was also one of the least likely to get the job.

Trapattoni led the data media poll with 18.6 percent, ahead of Lazio president and former World Cup-winning goalkeeper Dino Zoff on 17.5 percent. Real Madrid coach Fabio Capello, Sacchi's successor at AC Milan, was third on 16.5.

The only other man close to the leading trio was Italy under-21 coach Cesare Maldini on 13.4 percent.

However Maldini, the 64-year-old father of Italian captain Paolo Maldini, remained most likely to win the race.

No decision will be made until after December 14, when Italy's Soccer Federation elects a new chairman.

Trapattoni said on Monday he had no intention of replacing Sacchi while Bayern manager Uli Hoeness said the coach's contract ran to June 30, 1988 and he would be kept to it.

"It is always the same. The Italians always come up with such stories," Trapattoni commented on Monday.

His words fell on deaf ears in Italy, however.

"Italy summons Trap," declared the daily *Corriere Dello Sport* in a banner front page headline.

"He is the favorite, ahead of Maldini and Zoff."

The Turin daily sports paper *Tuttosport* made its thoughts clear in a front page headline: "Bayern, Let Trap Go."

Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea striker who had a major falling-out with Sacchi and has not played for Italy since December 1992, was quoted as saying he was ready and waiting for a call up and singled out Trapattoni and Zoff.

"As successors (to Sacchi) I can see only Trapattoni or Zoff. With Trapattoni I have had problems every so often. We did not always have the same ideas but we had mutual respect," The former Juventus and Sampdoria striker said.

The *Gazzetta Dello Sport* newspaper put the brake on Trapattoni, saying that his contract looked cast iron.

"It looks more and more like Maldini," was its verdict.

The under-21 coach was favored partly as a stopgap candidate, partly because he was 'in-house' and partly because he would be by far the cheapest option.

Capello told reporters on Monday that he was not interested in the Italian job while Zoff, who has not coached for more than two years, was noncommittal when asked. His contract with troubled Lazio still has a year and a half to run.

However *La Stampa* newspaper gave Zoff a 65 percent chance of taking over, ahead of Trapattoni on 25 percent and Maldini on eight. "Zoff is in pole position," it said.

While bets were placed on the future, those who regularly tormented Sacchi allowed themselves one last blast.

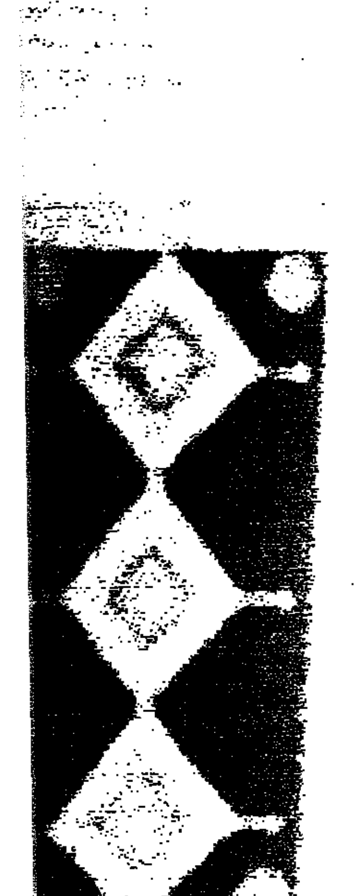
"The most widely heard phrase is 'thank heaven, they've saved the national team'," commented the editor of the *Gazzetta Dello Sport* in a front-page editorial on AC Milan's sudden midnight swoop that took Sacchi back to his former club.

"Regrets? For Sacchi's team, none...there has never been, in five years, the joy, the team spirit, that spiritual affinity between the team and the people," *Candido Cannavo* wrote.

But the last word went to the 'anti-Sacchi club'.

The implacable opponents of the coach announced their own demise with the words 'we have won our battle' and offered a final piece of advice.

"Choose a normal coach, one who can handle a group. We've had enough of sacred cows who think they are inventing soccer," said club president Lido Orsini. (AFP)



Asprilla's Goals Puts Newcastle Through

NEWCASTLE, England — Two late goals in the last nine minutes by Colombian striker Faustino Asprilla put Newcastle into the last eight of the UEFA Cup Tuesday in a 2-0 victory over Metz.

The English team, which tied 1-1 with Metz in France, was very fortunate to be level on terms when Asprilla stooped to head the first. But he created a brilliant second only a minute later to make it five goals in this season's competition and down the French club.

Sadly for the Colombian, he was carried off the field on a stretcher two minutes from the end apparently in pain with a leg injury. Manager Kevin Keegan said it was a hamstring pull.

The other sour note for Asprilla was that his elaborate celebration of the first goal — taking off his Newcastle shirt and waving it to the fans atop the corner flag — earned him a yellow card which means he misses the quarterfinal.

Asprilla's two late strikes eased the nerves of the Newcastle fans after Metz had created the better chances.

Newcastle almost went ahead in the 13th minute when Sylvain Kastendeuch cleared Keith Gillespie's low shot off the Metz line with goalkeeper Andre Biancarelli drawn out of position.

But Metz had a chance to go ahead in the 32nd minute when Frederic Arpinon shot too high from Didier Lang's leftwing cross.

But Lang should gave put his team ahead four minutes later when the Newcastle defense failed to clear Robert Pires' rightwing center and the unmarked forward headed over the bar from eight yards (meters).

Three minutes into the second half, Darren Peacock lost possession 25 yards from his own goal and Pires got free only to shoot wide with only Newcastle's Czech goalkeeper, Pavel Smicek, to beat.

A blunder by Belgian defender Philippe Albert let in Senegalese striker Amara Traore through 13 minutes from the end but Newcastle was rescued by a low diving save by goalkeeper Smicek.

Then came the late Asprilla show. After Metz failed to clear a free kick in the 81st minute, Peacock fired goalwards and the Colombian dipped his head to guide the ball into the corner of the net.

A minute later, Asprilla danced around a Metz defender, pushed the ball round another and then drove the ball past the keeper for the second. (AP)

Understanding Kung Fu as Described by a Master

By Ja'far Qasempour Jahangir

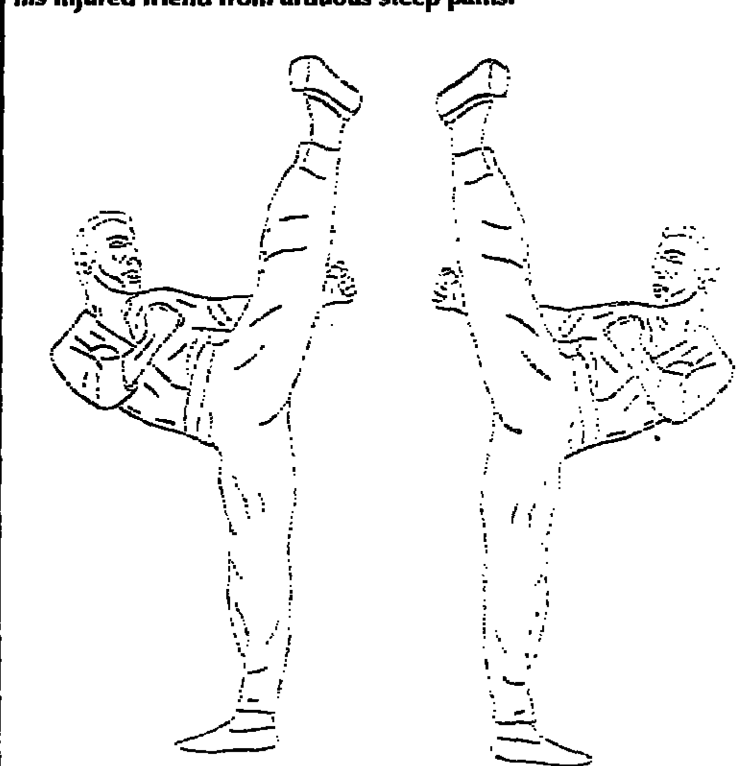
Skills of Kung Fu

What Is Kung Fu?

(Part 17)

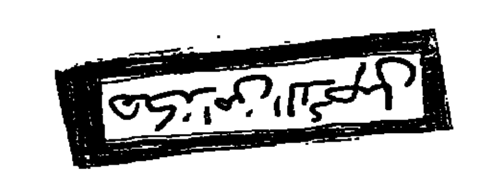
Chee-Eye, Internal Power

The word 'Chee-Eye' carries a series of meanings such as work, breath, power of life, air, etc. It is a term which the kung fu trainees learning the skills of martial arts often face with. So, they should get it well. All the invisible or unknown powers were introduced as Chee-Eye in ancient China. Undoubtedly, the concept of kung fu in not limited to China. 'Prana' in Indian yoga, 'reooaka' in Jewish, 'penyuma' in Greek, and some words in English like 'phenomenon' have many things in common with Chee-Eye principles. So far, we have talked about the unconscious trait of Chee-Eye education although its exercises bring about correct inspiration. The word Chee-Eye is based on understanding internal power or the things the Western sciences may define as material flowing powers. There is no magic or mystery about Chee-Eye. All of us have read many stories in dailies that ordinary people changed themselves into extraordinary ones in emergencies and crises and did strange things. There are a lot of examples regarding these impossible deeds. Take a witness of an accident rushes to rescue the wounded alone or some mothers who bend the rails to save a child or the soldiers who pass the minefields to rescue an injured soldier or a mountaineer carries his injured friend from arduous steep paths.



Most of us experience a moment in our lives an unconscious physical and mental power incomparable to other occasions. This is what the Chinese call Chee-Eye and kung fu trainees can enjoy it whenever they want and not just in emergency situations.

John F. Gilbee in his book, The Mysteries of World Martial Arts' refers to the Chee-Eye power of a Japanese master in kiaee-jutu, Johnzo-Mirus, who trained Gilbee to hit along his wrist by a sharp sword but a slight red trace appeared on his wrist since he had concentrated Chee-Eye power at his wrist. A Thai Shaolin master named An-Ah Hessin Yang saved his son from certain death through Chee-Eye power to obliterate Gilbee's doubts on Chee-Eye power. It was just Hessin Yang's power which rescued his son before Gilbee who had been frightened of the boy's death. A kung fu master from Peking called Ah Hessin Hoolai jumped from the third floor and landed safely by the side of Gilbee. It sounds impossible, doesn't it?



TEHRAN (December 4) – Majlis Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri awarding model students of Imam Khomeini's Relief Committee. Photo: Kaveh Ahmadi

U.S. Evacuation Starts of 4,500 People From North Iraq

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey – The U.S. evacuation of nearly 4,500 people from northern Iraq, most of them Kurdish aid workers and their families, started on Wednesday through southeast Turkey, witnesses said.

They said the first group of evacuees, in the third and largest such U.S. operation since Iraqi troops made an incursion into Kurdish-held northern Iraq in late August, entered Turkey at the sole crossing point of Habur.

Among them were "important agents who worked with the Americans," informed sources said.

They were to be flown by helicopter to Batman, 200 kilometers (120 miles) from the border, and will leave for the U.S. territory of Guam in the Pacific starting on Friday, the sources said.

The others are expected to spend several days at Silopi, near the Iraqi border, for identity checks before being transferred to Batman. The whole operation is to take between 10 and 15 days.

In Guam, the Iraqi Kurds will be given the necessary documentation to enter the U.S. mainland.

"We are helping with this evacuation on humanitarian grounds, as in the two previous operations," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Omer Akbel told reporters in Ankara.

In September, U.S. authorities airlifted about 2,140 Kurds who worked for the U.S. government.

These Kurds were working for humanitarian organizations in north Iraq within the framework of the allied "provide comfort" operation aimed at providing aid and protection to Iraqi Kurds.

An additional 600 Kurdish opposition activists were evacuated in October to protect them from reprisals by Iraqi agents.

U.S. officials maintain that Iraqi agents are operating in northern Iraq and have targeted Kurds linked with the U.S. government. But there has been no mention of any further evacuations, Turkish officials said.

Baghdad is preparing to resume oil exports for the first time since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, mostly through a pipeline linking Iraqi Kurdistan and Turkey.

Iraqi troops in August helped a Kurd faction led by Massud Barzani oust his rivals from the Kurdish "capital" of Arbil.

(AFP)

Netanyahu: Europe Should Not Act as Mediator Like U.S.

MADRID – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday stressed Europe's importance in the Middle East peace process at the end of a brief working visit here.

Europe could play a role "by talking to both sides," he told the press, while reiterating the Israeli position that Europe should not act as a mediator like the United States.

He said that in Lisbon, where he attended a summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on Monday and Tuesday, he had met European leaders who were "open" while he had expected "a wall of hostility."

"It is not my attitude to consider that Europe has nothing to do in the region and it is inconceivable that Europe has no interests in the region," he said.

He welcomed the appointment of the Spanish diplomat Miguel Angel Moratinos as the European Union's special envoy to the Middle East, who took up his job on Wednesday. He described him as very able, "a very good choice" and an example of the way in which Europe could help.

He promised that Israel would have a "frequent dialogue" with the EU envoy, who until now was Spain's ambassador to Israel. (AFP)

Kashmir Politician Escapes Bid on Life

SRINAGAR, India – At least four people were killed and 40 others injured Wednesday when Kashmir activists attempted to assassinate a communist politician at a public meeting, police said.

The activists hurled a grenade at the meeting addressed by a senior leader of the Communist Party of India-Marxist at Kulgam, 70 kilometers (43 miles) south of the summer capital Srinagar, police said.

"The meeting was addressed by Mohammed Yusuf Tarigami, the lone Communist Party legislator from Kashmir," a police spokesman said. "Militants first fired at Tarigami and then lobbed a powerful grenade.

"The function was about to conclude as the grenade landed near the stage killing two people immediately. Two others died on the way to the hospital."

The police spokesman said 20 people were critically injured in the grenade attack.

"Tarigami received splinter injuries in his leg but survived the assassination attempt," he said.

Muslim separatists, fighting for an independent state, have stepped up attacks on Indian troops and politicians since October, when Kashmir elected its first state government since 1990.

The September polls, branded a farce by neighboring Pakistan which disputes the territory with India, were boycotted by Muslim separatists.

The elections were won by Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah's National Conference, a Muslim-dominated party which campaigned for greater autonomy while pledging loyalty to India.

A similar blast killed two people outside a building housing top state politicians in Srinagar on October 22.

More than 15,000 people have died in Kashmir in separatist-linked violence since 1989. Muslim separatists are fighting for secession in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-dominated state.

The disputed Himalayan territory has sparked two wars between India and Pakistan. (AFP)

King Hussein to Visit Abu Dhabi

AMMAN – Jordan's King Hussein is to visit Abu Dhabi on Saturday to congratulate the president of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the 25th anniversary of the Persian Gulf Federation, officials here said Wednesday.

The Jordanian monarch is expected to discuss bilateral relations and the Middle East peace process during his talks in Abu Dhabi with Sheikh Zayed ibn Sultan al-Nahayan, the officials said.

King Hussein, who is currently in London, is expected back in the Jordanian capital on Thursday, they said.

(AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 1)

MUBARAK...

Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai on Sunday accused the Arabs of "war-mongering" and urged them to tone down their criticism of the right-wing administration of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, also on Sunday, singled out Egypt as having taken a leading role in the criticism against Israel with the aim of putting pressure on the Zionist state.

Mubarak said he learned that Levy would seek U.S. intervention over his latest criticism of Israel, namely a warning that Netanyahu's policy of expanding Jewish settlements on occupied Arab land could torpedo the peace process.

Reiterating this position in Tunis, Mubarak said: "We are the ones who will contact the United States to make Israel respect the agreements and to stop from provocative statements."

He also called for an end to the "war of words."

"The issue of war is very dangerous for all parties. Let's look for peace instead of war, which depletes economies and kill people," Mubarak said.

"Through the statements of its officials Israel wants Arab countries to adapt themselves to its policies. This is impossible," the Egyptian leader added.

He dismissed the need for an Arab summit now but said one could become necessary if Arab-Israeli peace negotiations reach a deadend.

Egypt, which along with Jordan is the only Arab country to have diplomatic relations with Israel, has become very critical of Netanyahu's hardline stance on peace in recent months.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa met Netanyahu in Lisbon on Monday on the sidelines of a summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and said the encounter was "useful and fruitful."

Mussa said he delivered a message from Mubarak to Netanyahu and hoped that strained relations between the two countries would soon improve.

(AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 1)

COUNTDOWN...

repairs to a metering station for Iraq's main oil export pipeline.

Saybolt is in charge of monitoring Iraq's oil exports under the UN oil-for-food deal, while Lloyd's of London is to supervise imports of humanitarian goods aimed at easing the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Three Lloyd's employees Tuesday wrapped up an inspection tour of customs posts on the Turkish and Jordanian borders as well as on the Persian Gulf. They are to report back soon to the United Nations, along with the Saybolt team.

"After the reports, the United Nations is to set a date for implementation of the accord," said the UN official, asking not to be named. He said the issue of lodgings for UN staff in Iraq is also in the process of being settled.

Iraqi officials say they expect oil exports to resume, for the first time in six years, between December 10 and 15.

In New York, ambassador Paolo Fulci of Italy, the current UN Security Council president, said Tuesday that the oil-for-food agreement "hopefully will begin to be implemented this month."

The Security Council was awaiting the final green light from the UN secretary general once the Saybolt experts have reported that the Zakho metering station had been repaired to international standards.

The report is expected "at the latest at the end of this week," said Fulci. "Then we will wait anxiously for the Secretary General (Boutros Boutros-Ghali) to give the signal."

The accord, signed in May but delayed by a political tug-of-war between Baghdad and Washington, comes into force the day after Boutros-Ghali informs the council that all preparations have been completed.

Fulci warned that "any delay means the death from starvation" of more Iraqi civilians. "We will not let one day be lost in this implementation to save innocent human lives," he said.

The deal allows Iraq, which has been under crippling sanctions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, to export two billion dollars worth of oil every six months to purchase food and medicine for the civilian population.

The money raised from oil sales will also go to defray UN costs and to pay for war reparations stemming from the invasion.

Iraqi Oil Minister Amer Rashid has said Baghdad is due to sign "before the end of the week" contracts with more than 50 oil companies. Baghdad will export around 500,000 barrels a day, depending on international market prices.

The French oil company Total has said it plans to lift some 30,000 barrels a day of Iraqi oil.

(AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 1)

REYSHAHRI...

ering that his political group advocates Islamic values, he was asked whether he believes his election as president would intensify the pressures of the arrogant powers on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He replied, "It is clear that, if we are out to defend the achievements of the Islamic Revolution, we have no alternative but to stress and uphold the Islamic values. The pressures exerted by the arrogant powers will neither be de-escalated nor intensified by the candidature of any specific individual, since those powers are basically against an Islamic system founded on Islamic principles and values. Thus, their hostility is directed at the whole Islamic system and not specific individuals."

Commenting on the SDVIR's economic strategy, the hojjatoleslam said, "The basic economic approach and strategy adopted by the SDVIR is, in fact, the one enshrined in the Islamic Republic Constitution, and the Leader of the Islamic Revolution has elaborated on its pivotal policies. Based on what is in the constitution, we have worked out our economic strategy and will announce it one month ahead of the next presidential election."

(Contd from Pg. 1)

UN: IRAN...

But it added that it was "astonishing" that the Americans failed to mention the sanctions violations at ports where the illegal goods are discharged, in a reference to other littoral states.

German Ambassador Tono Eitel said that the committee would write to Iran, which he did not name, to "encourage its efforts to prevent trafficking through its territorial waters."

He noted that delegations at the meeting, including the U.S. delegation, had welcomed Iran's initiative. The sanctions committee groups all 15 Security Council members.

(AFP)

(Contd from Pg. 1)

UN SAYS...

charges accusing Blaskic, as HVO commander, of being individually responsible for crimes committed by his soldiers between January 1993 and April 1994.

Blaskic was already charged jointly with five other Bosnian Croats for the massacre of about 100 Muslim civilians in November 1995.

Substitute prosecutor Mark Harmon said the new charges extend the period of Blaskic's culpability by one year.

Blaskic now stands accused of violating the laws and conventions of war by taking Muslim civilian hostages in order to exchange them for prisoners and to use them as human shields to protect HVO positions in Vitez and Merdani.

The charges state that civilian Muslims in Vitez, Kiseljak and Busovaca were subjected to "cruel and even inhumane treatment," including some who were beaten to death, when they were forced to dig trenches along front lines.

Blaskic pleaded not guilty to the charges brought a year ago against him and five other Bosnian Croats for the massacre of about 100 Muslim civilians in the village of Ahmici and the deadly shelling of the central city of Zenica in April 1993.

Blaskic has been detained in the Hague since he turned himself in on April 1 this year, becoming the first of the tribunal's defendants to do so voluntarily.

The prosecutor has asked, in view of the new charges, that Blaskic's trial for the Ahmici massacre be postponed from January 8 to April 21 next year so that the prosecution can complete its investigation.

(AFP)

WEATHER

The Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological Organization announced today's weather as follows:

Forecast for Tehran:

Max. temp. 12°C
Min. temp. 3°C

Partly cloudy with dust

Warmest Point:
Bandar-e Dayyer 26°C

Coldest Point:
Shahr-e Babak -13°C

Some cities of the world

Cities	Max °C	Cities	Max °C
Riyadh	22	Vienna	–
Istanbul	–	Moscow	0
Rome	11	Madrid	–
Athens	–	Abu Dhabi	27
London	9	Karachi	25
Paris	8	New Delhi	21
Frankfurt	–	Kuwait	24

Hungarian Minister Welcomes Iran's Reviving of Silk Road

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Deputy Agriculture Minister of Hungary Zoltan Kis told Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs, Mahmoud Vaezi, here Tuesday that he reached agreement with Iranian authorities on holding the two countries' joint economic commisison next spring.

The Hungarian official expressed pleasure with the projected revival of the ancient Silk Road linking East Asia with Europe via Iran and the Middle East, and said Hungary was interested to have access to Iran and the Central Asian countries via the modern Silk Road, IRNA reported.

Kis also said that his government looked forward to receiving Iranian businessmen in a bid to broaden mutual economic and trade relations with Iran. He added that the formation of joint enterprises with Iran would help promote trade exchanges between the two countries.

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran said in response that the Islamic Republic looked forward to seeing Hungary benefit from surface roads and the motorway and railroad facilities of the Silk Road that was about to be revived.

Vaezi also expressed hope that in light of the cessation of hostilities in the Balkans, Iran would be able to export oil via the trunk line at the Adriatic Sea to Hungary.

He said Islamic Iran was for broader relations with Hungary in every field.

Vaezi expressed confidence that the joint economic commission of the two countries that was to meet next spring would identify new areas of bilateral cooperation.

Corsican Nationalists Claim Six Island Blasts

AJACCIO, Corsica — A Key Corsican nationalist group claimed responsibility Wednesday for a string of bomb attacks on the island at the weekend, French television reported.

In a statement addressed to the state-run France 3 television channel, the Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC-Canal Historique) said it was responsible for six attacks in Corsica overnight Saturday to Sunday.

The statement listed the attacks carried out in Ajaccio against the offices of the French travel agency Air Inter, a government building, two banks, a post office, as well as an attack against a private home in Porto-Vecchio, on the island's southeast coast.

In recent months the group has claimed a handful of blasts, all on the French mainland.

Before those blasts the militants had not struck on the mainland for several years. It generally carries out regular low level attacks, mostly on public buildings, on the island itself.

The new terror campaign was hinted at directly in September, when a strongly-worded FLNC statement accusing French Prime Minister Alain Juppe personally of "denying the existence of the Corsican people."

(AFP)

Exhibition of Timurid Books Opens in Tashkent

TASHKENT — An exhibition of manuscripts, letters, official decrees and other documents of Timurid Era (14th-15th centuries) opened at Tashkent Museum with cooperation of the Iranian Embassy and the Science Academy of Uzbekistan here Tuesday.

Among the officials present at the opening ceremonies were Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Research and Education Affairs, Abbas Malcki, Deputy Minister of Culture of Uzbekistan, Kozyrev, Iranian Ambassador to Tashkent, Mohsen Pakayeen, and ambassadors of other countries and diplomats.

Malcki said at the ceremony that the exhibition in Tashkent is a token of the depth of relations between Iran and Uzbekistan. He said the historical documents remaining from the Timurid Era could be considered as the cultural element linking Iran with the Central Asian republics. (IRNA)



TEHRAN, (Dec. 4): Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, holds talks with Armenian deputy foreign minister who is here to participate in the quadrilateral meeting of deputy foreign ministers of Iran, Armenia, Georgia and Greece.



TEHRAN, (Dec. 4): The visiting Greek deputy foreign minister shake hands with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati of Iran.



TEHRAN, (Dec, 4) – Georgian deputy foreign minister and Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, discuss issues of mutual interests on the sideline of the quadrilateral meeting of the deputy foreign ministers of Greece, Iran, Armenia and Georgia.

Photos by Abbas Kowsari

Central African Capital Tense, But Calm

BANGUI – The Central African capital Bangui woke Wednesday from an exceptionally quiet night as talks were underway to put an end to the roadblocks in the Central African capital, informed sources said.

But the sources said a group of young people had set up roadblocks in the eastern part of the capital, after several civilians belonging to the Yakoma, the same ethnic group as rebels, were stopped from moving freely by troops loyal to President Ange-Felix Patasse.

Still, the capital was calm, despite clashes Tuesday when mutinous troops attacked the positions of government soldiers in Bangui, forcing the loyalists to fall back at one point, informed sources said.

In town, several shops were open and people strolled the streets. Security troops maintained strict surveillance in the capital, stopping car drivers and pedestrians for passport controls.

Tension was still present but it seemed an improvement after the political unrest noted in the past few days, observers said.

Patasse had talks Tuesday with former President and Military Chief Andre Kolingba, who is a member of the same ethnic group as most of the rebels, the Yakoma.

Kolingba said afterwards that everything must be done to preserve national unity and peace.

The rebels mutinied two weeks ago and called for the removal of Patasse, accusing him of high treason for allegedly encouraging tribalism and bringing in French troops to shore up his regime.

French troops are permanently stationed in the country and helped to put down two previous uprisings this year. (AFP)

Deputy Minister of Culture and Higher Education Condoles Demise of Pakistani Professor

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Deputy Minister of Culture and Higher Education, Ali A. Salehi, condoled the sad demise of Muslim Pakistani scientist and thinker, Professor Abdosalam.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, Salehi underlined that Abdosalam's intellectual and scientific achievements and contributions to physics was one of the glories of Pakistan and the international community.

Abdosalam was an excellent model of humanity and indefatigable scientist who combined religion with the contemporary world, recognizing the participation of the Third World, especially the Muslim countries, in scientific and technological developments. He believed that in order to achieve progress, these countries should promote their efforts to develop their skilled and educated manpower. He was deeply convinced that though the Third World's backwardness was partly due to foreign domination or colonization, the main reason for this gap has been the lethargy and sluggishness of the scientists and intellectuals in these countries.

Professor Abdosalam was truly confident that the existing talents and efficiency of the Third World is comparable to those of the developed nations. He was confident of the fact that scientific hegemony cannot be monopolized by a particular community, and that "scientific thinking and creation are the common heritage of all mankind".

This compassionate scholar was not only aware of the profound barriers to development, but was fully acquainted with the ways and means of saving deprived and oppressed nations. He believed that our political intention to benefit from science and technology is the first initiative in achieving progress. Next would be to promote more equitable distribution of scientific resources between rich nations and those in poverty, Salehi said in his statement.

In conclusion, the Iranian deputy foreign minister reiterated that it is the duty of Abdosalam's companions and other scholars to discuss the research projects carried out by that learned scientist concerning particle physics, field theory and high energy nuclear physics in memory of his sustained contribution to the progress and development of human knowledge.

Hormuz Int'l University to Start Operation This Year

QESHM, Hormuzgan Province – Hormuz International University based in the Persian Gulf island of Qeshm is to start operation this year by admitting 20 students for master degree in the field of biotechnology, said an official of the university Iraj Valipour on Tuesday.

He added that all courses will be presented in English and those who successfully pass entrance examinations will have to undergo intensive English language courses.

The university will offer new courses in technical, engineering and basic science fields in the future, he added.

Based on the bilateral agreement inked between Hormuz International University and Carleton International University of Canada, the Canadian university is to dispatch some instructors to the Iranian university, he added.

(IRNA)

Bosnian Government Jeep Hijacked in Disputed Territory

TUZLA – A jeep belonging to the Muslim-controlled Bosnian government was hijacked Tuesday in Serb-held territory close to the northern town of Brcko, UN police said Wednesday.

The opel jeep, with Sarajevo number plates, was driving near the town of Brcko, claimed by both Serbs and Muslims, when it was stopped by unidentified armed men who forced the occupants out and took the vehicle, said UN police spokesman Andrea Angeli.

He said the driver, Huso Muhovic, was hit over the head with a pistol but not seriously hurt in the hijacking, which took place at 5 p.m.(1600 GMT).

Brcko is tense following the decision of the Bosnian Serbs to pull out of an arbitration process begun last year to decide by December 14 who will control the town. (AFP)

(Contd from Pg.11)

HUMANITARIAN...

Burundi and Zaire in the Tanzanian camps.

Canada has 280 personnel and three Hercules in Entebbe. There is also a 12-member Canadian liaison mission in Kigali, capital of neighboring Rwanda.

Britain has 30 men and one reconnaissance plane.

The U.S. Air Force, which has about 300 personnel and up to five aircraft, has been using Entebbe as a base to fly its P-3 Orion reconnaissance planes over eastern Zaire.

The original international plan washfor a Canadian-led military intervention force to help reach refugees stranded by rebel fighting in eastern Zaire. But a rebel attack freed half a million refugees from Hutu militia domination and allowed them to flood home last month, pre-empting the international force.

Binn said latest estimates were that 610,000 Rwandan refugees have returned to Rwanda from Zaire and 200,000 more might return.

On Monday, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Goma, Zaire, said reconnaissance planes found the last large group of refugees moving west toward the interior of Zaire rather east to Rwanda - 150,000 near Biriko, 70 kilometers (45 miles) southwest of Goma. (AP)

(Contd from Pg. 11)

ZAIRE......

conformity with international conventions" and called for the "rehabilitation of states' central authority."

English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking African nations have been invited to the plenary sessions, bringing the number of countries due to take part to 49.

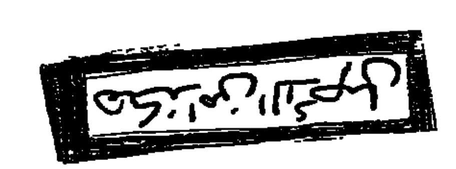
The theme of the Franco-African Summit is "good governance and development".

Central African Republic President Ange-Felix Patasse has abandoned plans to attend the summit after further clashes between mutinous and loyal troops in his capital, Bangui.

A spokesman for the president said Foreign Minister Michel Ngbezera-Bria would represent Patasse at the conference, "which will have to consider the seriousness of the situation" in Centrafrica.

The summit officially opens Thursday.

(AFP)



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Father Brings 12-Year-Old Kidnapper to Court

SHANGHAI – The father of a four-year-old boy who was kidnapped by a 12-year-old girl for four days has brought a suit against the kidnapper and her parents.

Yang Zhongjun was claiming 3,800 yuan ($457) for medical treatment for his son, Beibei, plus nursing expenses and 10,000 yuan compensation for mental suffering.

The girl Xu Liping, kidnapped Beibei on November 19, beat him unconscious and put him in a taxi before running away.

Xu, who had suffered beatings at home from her father, had abducted a four-year-old girl in September and forced the younger child to beg on the streets by beating her. (AFP)

Security Summit a Big Snore for Some

LISBON – Listening to more than 50 leaders deliver their speeches at a European security summit can be a serious challenge even for the most attentive of political ears.

Swiss President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz, seated at the long, oval table in Lisbon with other heads of state and government, stole a few seconds to catnap before addressing the meeting himself.

After gourmet Portuguese hosts had laid on a hearty VIP lunch, eagle-eyed observers spotted the Swiss leader – still wearing his simultaneous translation earphones– with his head back, eyes closed and jaw ajar. (Reuter)

Miners' Strike, Defense Sacking Row Hit Russia



OSINNIKI, Kemerovo Region, Russian Federation (Dec. 3): Miners of the "Vysokaya", "Shushtalepskaya" and "Kapitalnaya" pits with a placard reading "A government which cannot feed its people should resign" during a rally in Osinniki in the Kemerovo region, with about 400,000 Russian coalminers joining the national strike in protest at the non-payment of wages.

(AFP PHOTO)

MOSCOW -- The Kremlin was on Wednesday looking for solutions to a nationwide strike by 400,000 unpaid coalminers and a growing political row over the sacking of the general commanding Russia's land forces.

Trade Union officials said 154 out of Russia's 189 pits stopped work on Tuesday when the miners launched a nationwide strike over unpaid wages. They estimated the government owes the miners at least 1.5 trillion roubles ($300 million).

As Kremlin officials struggled to cope with the protest, the Defense Ministry faced a political scandal.

A commission set up by President Boris Yeltsin to advise him on appointments of top military officials was due to meet on Wednesday amid a row over the Defense Ministry's dismissal of Land Forces Commander General Vladimir Semyonov.

Yeltsin's spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky said the ministry had jumped the gun and the president had not signed the dismissal decree.

Defence Minister Igor Rodionov put off a four-day visit to the United States planned to start on Wednesday although the ministry gave no reason for the postponement.

Miners' leaders called on Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to quit, saying his government was to blame for unpaid wages. (Reuter)

Guatemalan Cease-Fire Accord Signed

OSLO – Guatemalan rebel and government representatives signed a cease-fire accord here Wednesday, a key step toward ending a 36-year civil war, the longest running in Central America.

The accord signed at city hall in Oslo formalizes a truce in force since March, and is one of a series of accords due to be signed before an overall peace agreement is signed in Guatemala city on December 29.

The war pitting an umbrella grouping of leftist rebels and successive rightwing governments has left more than 100,000 people dead and 40,000 missing, human rights groups said.

It has also seen allegations of summary executions and other brutalities by Guatemalan security forces against Indians, farmers and other civilians. (AFP)

Pakistan Rocked by Two Bombings in 24 Hours

KARACHI – A bomb exploded in this Pakistani port city injuring 17 people Wednesday, as officials blamed Indian agents for a blast 24 hours earlier in the city of Lahore during Chinese President Jiang Zemin's visit there.

Officials said a possible link between the two bombings was being investigated.

One of the victims of the Karachi bombing was in critical condition with severe facial injuries, doctors said, and a few others were seriously injured.

The explosion caused a deep crater outside the seven-story Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) building, which also houses several privately-owned offices, an AFP correspondent on the scene reported.

At least 12 people were injured in Lahore Tuesday, when a bomb exploded outside a busy shopping center, a few kilometers from the state guest house where Jiang's entourage and his Pakistani host President Farooq Ahmed Leghari were staying.

Officials in Lahore accused the Indian intelligence organization known as Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of being involved in the blast.

The bomb was placed outside a branch of the national bank of Pakistan on the ground floor of the PIDC building, badly damaging the bank premises. (AFP)

Constitutional Court Certifies New Constitution

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa – A new constitution guaranteeing equal rights in South Africa finally won approval Wednesday from the Constitutional Court.

The charter drafted by an elected constitutional assembly had been rejected by the nation's highest court earlier this year, forcing the assembly to rework some sections.

In its ruling, the Constitutional Court certified the revamped document Wednesday and sent it on to President Nelson Mandela to sign it into law. The signing ceremony was tentatively scheduled for Dec.10.

The 150-page constitution drafted over two years is one of the most liberal in the world.

It includes a bill of rights that guarantees equal rights for all, a far cry from the discrimination and repression of the apartheid era. (AP)

Paris Underground Train Bomb Kills Two, Wounds 48

PARIS -- Two people were killed and 48 injured when a gas-canister bomb blew out the side of a regional express train in a Paris underground station during the early evening rush hour on Tuesday, officials said.

President Jacques Chirac called the attack "a barbaric and terrorist act" and vowed that France would do everything in its power to fight terrorism.

Seven of the wounded were in critical condition, three of them fighting for their lives, and 28 were seriously injured, rescue officials said.

The explosion occurred in the fourth carriage of the RER train at 6.05 p.m. (1705 GMT) as it drew into the Port Royal Station on the left bank.

"We heard a big explosion. They told us 'get out, get out' but we couldn't breathe because there was so much smoke. It was panic, fear," said one passenger who was on the train.

The bomb was placed inside a 15-kg (33 lb) gas canister which had been packed with nails, no one claimed responsibility. (Reuter)

Aung San Suu Kyi Under "Virtual House Arrest"

RANGOON – Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi is under "virtual house arrest," a senior executive from her National League for Democracy (NLD) told AFP Wednesday.

While authorities claimed she was free to leave her Rangoon lakeside compound, party co-vice chairman Tin Oo said that it had been sealed off, in the aftermath of a student protest march that ended early Tuesday morning.

At 7 p.m. Tuesday (1230 GMT) Aung San Suu Kyi demanded that she be permitted to meet with party president Aung Shwe, and co-vice chairmen Kui Maung and Tin Oo.

"If you don't fulfill my wish I will rush through and go and see them myself," he quoted the Nobel Peace laureate as saying before the meeting was allowed. (AFP)

60,000 Muslims Rally in the South as Fighting Rages

SULTAN KUDARAT, Philippines -- Some 60,000 Muslims gathered in this southern town Wednesday to denounce discrimination by the Christian majority, some calling for a separate Islamic state, witnesses said.

The rally, organized by Muslim religious leaders, was held as security forces battled activists of the the Muslim faction Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Zamboanga Peninsula to the west, leaving at least 12 people dead.

Thousands of Muslims from the main southern island of Mindanao had been gathering here since Tuesday. The protesters occupied two kilometers (1.2 miles) of a national highway.

Army division spokesman Lieutenant Noel Detoyato estimated the crowd at between 50,000 to 60,000 people.

The military said that two civilians were killed and five others were wounded Wednesday as clashes between the MILF and soldiers escalated in the town of Sirawai outside the main southern city of Zamboanga west of Sultan Kudarat. (AFP)

Milosevic Warned That Crackdown Could Lead to Retaliation

BELGRADE – Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic faced a 16th day of street protests Wednesday as Western countries warned that any crackdown on the demonstrators could trigger international retaliation.

Increasing numbers of police have been on the streets in the last few days, as up to 100,000 students and opposition supporters have been protesting over the authorities' refusal to accept the results of November 17 local elections.

In the polls, the opposition claimed victory in 15 out of 18 towns and cities, including Belgrade.

Milosevic's ruling Socialist Party maintains that the elections are a "domestic matter," but the United States and Britain have warned the Serbian leader not to use force to quell the protests.

"If Milosevic uses force, undemocratic means, to try and quell that opposition he will infer a harsh response from international opinion," British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind warned in an interview with the BBC.

And in the first U.S. reaction, White House Spokesman Michael McCurry urged Western European countries to withhold trade privileges and he threatened to prevent rump Yugoslavia being allowed back into international organizations.

"It would be a real setback for Serbia's desire to join the community of nations, to expand its contacts with Europe, to seek greater trade benefits, commercial benefits with other nations if they were to suppress what is clearly a rising of the Serbian people in the interest of democracy," he said. (AFP)

Thousands Evacuated as Rains Hit Indian State ahead of Cyclone

HYDERABAD, India -- Heavy rains Wednesday lashed the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh where the authorities have evacuated more than 214,000 people ahead of a cyclone.

Officials warned the storm would be harsher than one that killed 1,050 people last month.

The rains began hitting the coastal region of Andhra Pradesh as authorities moved much of the population into schools and colleges turned into emergency shelters.

An official said the cyclone, code-named "08B," was moving slower than anticipated towards the coast from the Bay of Bengal and would hit the state late Wednesday.

"It is going around in circles," the official, Ramji Sudan, said in a telephone interview. "It is somewhat like a rogue elephant out at sea. We do not know what this elephant is going to do."

The cyclone warning center said the storm now had windspeeds of 100 kilometers. (AFP)



TEL AVIV, Israel (Dec. 3): (FILES) An undated file photo shows Joel Herzog, 47, the son of former Israeli President Chaim Herzgov, who has been detained in connection with a corruption investigation in the southeastern French city of Grasse. Herzog, who runs the Swiss group Gaon, owner of the Riviera-Noga-Hilton Casino in Cannes, has been implicated in a bribery scandal involving the Mayor of Cannes, Michel Mouillot, who was jailed July 19 for passive corruption.

(AFP PHOTO)

Pakistan Rocked by Two Bombings in 24 Hours

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Three Former ADM Aides and Japanese Executive Indicted for Price-Fixing

WASHINGTON — Three former top Archer Daniels Midland Co. executives and a Japanese businessman were indicted Tuesday on Federal charges of conspiring to fix prices in the worldwide market for the feed additive lysine.

A Korean company also agreed to plead guilty to separate charges and pay a $1.25 million fine for its role in the conspiracy, the Justice Department announced.

This is the third round of charges brought in the department's antitrust investigation of the Food and Feed Additives Industry. In October, Archer Daniels Midland pleaded guilty and paid $100 million, the largest criminal antitrust fine in history, for its role in two international conspiracies to fix prices and divide up markets for lysine and citric acid around the world.

Among those charged Tuesday by the Federal Grand Jury in Chicago was the chief Whistle-Blower in the case, Mark E. Whitacre, the former president of ADM's Bioproducts Division.

During more than two years as an FBI informant, Whitacre made covert tape recordings of ADM meetings for prosecutors. ADM fired Whitacre in 1995, accusing him of embezzling company funds.

Also indicted was Michael D. Andreas, who is on leave as executive vice president. He is the son of the company's politically influential chief, Dwayne D. Andreas.

Others indicted were:

-Terrance S. Wilson, who retired in October after ADM's guilty plea from his post as group vice president and president of ADM's Corn Processing Division.

-Kazutoshi Yamada of Tokyo, Japan, managing director of Ajinomoto Co. Inc., which pleaded guilty last month in the Lysine case.

Cheil Jedang Ltd. of Seoul, South Korea, agreed to plead guilty and pay the $1.25 million fine for its part in the Lysine conspiracy. A Federal Court must approve that plea agreement.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Joel I. Klein, head of the Antitrust Division, said the government is continuing its investigation into price-fixing of lysine, citric acid and high fructose corn syrup. Lysine, a $600 million a year industry, is used by farmers to ensure proper growth of swine and poultry. Citric acid is added to food and detergents — corn syrup is a sweetener.

The grand jury charged that the defendants conspired with four companies — ADM, Ajinomoto Co. Inc., Kyowa Hakko Kogyo Co. Ltd. and Sewon America Inc., all of which have pleaded guilty earlier - and with other unnamed corporations and executives to reduce competition in the lysine market here and abroad by fixing prices and allocating sales volumes from June 1992 through June 27, 1995.

The indictment said the conspirators met and agreed to raise prices for lysine to agreed-upon levels, decided how much each company would sell, traded price quotations and price announcements and monitored compliance with their agreements.

"Today's charges demonstrate that regardless of how much money a corporation pays in a fine to settle criminal charges, the individual executives at that corporation who have violated the antitrust laws will not escape prosecution for their wrongful conduct," said Gary R. Spratling, deputy assistant attorney general.

All those previously pleading guilty have agreed to cooperate with the continuing government investigation by providing documents and witnesses, said James B. Burns, U.S. attorney in Chicago.

The defendants are charged with violating the Sherman Act, which carries a maximum fine for corporations of $10 million or twice the gain or loss caused by the crime, whichever is largest. Individuals face a top penalty of three years in prison and a fine equal to the largest of: $350,000 or twice the gain or loss from the crime.

The defendants were to be arraigned at a later date in Chicago.

(AP)



HONG GAI, VIET NAM (Nov.30): Women sell coal at a market in Hong Gai a town in the North-Western province of Quang Ninh. The province is known for having the largest coal mines in Vietnam with a total reserve estimate of approximately 3.6 billions tonnes. Vietnam's coal production would reach 9 million tonnes in 1996.

(AFP PHOTO)

Australian Economic Growth Slowing

SYDNEY — Australia's economic growth slowed to 3.8 percent in the year to September, the Australian Bureau of Statistics announced on Wednesday, adding support to economists' calls for another interest rate cut.

Australia's gross domestic product (GDP) for the September quarter rose 0.8 percent, but annual growth fell to around 3.8 percent from 4.5 percent in June due to the 2.0 percent rise in the September 1995 quarter dropping out of calculations.

Economists' median forecast had been for a 0.9 percent quarterly rise and annual growth of 3.4 percent.

"Well, I think this shows that the problem with the Australian economy is not that it's about to stall, it's that it's essentially still stuck in second gear," said Chris Caton, chief economist at Bankers Trust Australia.

Caton said that both the quarterly and annual data sounded good, but added: "We know the economy is currently softer than that, we know that we'll be lucky to get a continuation of that growth in the December quarter."

Economists had said that a slowing annual economic growth would support expectations of a third interest rate cut, following the 0.5 percentage point cuts on July 31 and November 6, official cash rates are currently 6.5 percent.

"With inflation very well restrained and high real interest rates, there is overwhelming justification for a further cut in interest rates," said Craig James, senior economist at Colonial State Bank.

The board of the Reserve Bank of Australia met on Tuesday for its regular monthly board meeting.

Some economists had expected the bank to cut rates on Wednesday but there was no announcement when the bank made its regular report to the market on its dealing intentions.

The Australian dollar fell about 2-1/2 cents to about 78.5 U.S. cents overnight in expectation that Australian interest rates were heading down but it recovered to about 80 U.S. cents in Australian trading and was little changed after the GDP data.

(AP)

Protests Could Affect Yugoslav Economic Revival

BELGRADE — Independent Yugoslav analysts warned on Tuesday that anti-government protests could harm the country's attempts to rejoin international financial bodies and secure urgently needed capital to revive its economy.

Belgrade has been shaken by two weeks of street protests since the socialist government annulled an opposition victory in the capital and other cities in elections on November 17.

The United States and its allies have urged President Slobodan Milosevic to show restraint and respect the right to demonstrate peacefully after threats of police intervention.

Yugoslavia, comprising Serbia and Montenegro, has been crippled economically by almost four years of U.N. sanctions and the loss of markets in former republics which seceded.

A trade and oil embargo was lifted last October but an 'outer wall' of sanctions preventing Belgrade's access to the international capital market remained in place.

Analysts warned the West would maintain them to exert pressure on Milosevic.

"There are too many political conditions to be met prior to our readmission to the IMF and the World Bank," one analyst who asked not to be named said. "The protests are just one aspect."

"The member countries in those financial institutions do not want to finance belgrade which they accused of starting the wars in former yugoslavia."

According to some estimates, Yugoslavia needed at least $2 billion a year to keep its economy alive and pay some $600 million in interest rates on its foreign debt.

"A political crisis sparked by vote-rigging will postpone Belgrade's acceptance by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank," Danica Popovic of the private Cesmecon Centre for Economic Studies told Reuters.

"The regime is being more careful about using force to quell the protests than it was in 1991 and 1993," Popovic said. "The pressure on it is huge and it shows how important it is for Belgrade to return to the IMF."

Businessmen claimed they already felt the effects of the protests.

"Our bank was supposed to get a credit line from a French bank," said the director of a Belgrade Bank, who talked on condition of anonymity. "But everything was delayed indefinitely because of the protests.

"Milosevic must do something about the election results if he wants the economy to survive."

(REUTER)

Arafat Orders Lowering of Bread Prices by 15 Percent

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Yasser Arafat ordered bread prices lowered by 15 percent Tuesday to help Palestinians make ends meet despite high unemployment and prolonged Israeli security blockades of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The closures, imposed to keep Islamic militant suicide bombers out of Israel, have barred tens of thousands of Palestinians from jobs in the Jewish state.

Arafat has estimated the closure costs the Palestinian economy $7 million to $9 million a day in lost wages and income. The Palestinian Labor Ministry said Tuesday that unemployment had risen to more than 60 percent as a result of the closures.

The average annual per capita income in Gaza was about $650 last year, or about one-twentieth of what Israelis make, according to UN figures.

In Gaza city, Palestinians formed lines outside bakeries Tuesday morning to buy the cheaper bread. Bakery owner Hassan Salam had posted a sign in his shop window announcing the new prices. Three kilos of bread now cost six shekels ($1.84), down from seven shekels ($2.14).

One of the customers waiting in line at the Salam bakery was Nasser Ali, 39, a father of five who used to work at a construction site in Israel.

Ali praised to price cut, but said Arafat needed to do more to pressure Israel to ease the closure. "When they last eased the closure, I got only three days of work in Israel," Ali said, adding that he made about $250 in that period. "This is not enough to live on for a full month."

(AP)

China Moves to Clean Up Stock Investment Funds

SHANGHAI — China is cleaning up its market for mutual funds to prepare them to become a key vehicle to channel huge bank deposits back into the economy and stabilize its volatile stock markets, analysts said on Monday.

Among the most important steps, Beijing last week lifted a three-year ban on new listings of stock investment funds and has said it will shortly promulgate a set of rules governing the management of such funds.

Three funds listed last week surged as investors sought to buy into what analysts see becoming a major focus for the market in the months ahead.

The first effort to establish investment funds in the early 1990s collapsed in disarray because of a lack of adequate regulations and supervision with many losing money.

A total of 75 funds were set up, but only a few received approval from the Central Bank, and only 22 have been listed on China's two stock exchanges. Investors in unlisted funds will be unable to recover their cash for years to come.

"The central government first of all wants to clean up the fund market," said Shao Jiejun, a manager at Shenyin Wanguo securities which manages baoding fund, one of China's existing stock investment funds.

"The fund money is expected to gradually flow into stocks, which should benefit the market greatly," he added.

At the moment, less than 10 percent of the money in existing funds is invested in stocks, Zhou Daojiong, chairman of the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC), told a recent seminar in Beijing.

"Quality of fund managers is poor," Zhou was quoted by the China securities as saying, "there have been many cases of irregularities and some funds have been used to participate in market manipulation and insider trading."

Most of the money was invested by the fund managers in industry and real estate projects two or three years ago when the stock markets were in a deep slide.

"Time is needed for old funds to withdraw from industrial and real estate projects and to establish new funds," said Xu Zhiling, deputy general manager of the Securities Trading Department of China Guotai securities.

Beijing has given strong indications that it supports the establishment of new investment funds and sees them as a major means of funnelling money from bank deposits, currently at record levels of more than three trillion yuan ($361.4 billion), back into the economy.

Experts say the authorities want to gradually replace the system of bank loans which currently support enterprises with a share system in which firms obtain money through investment rather than borrowing.

China's two stock markets in Shanghai and Shenzhen also suffer from huge volatility because of an absence of large funds and institutional money providing a non-speculative base to trading, they said.

Currently, stock funds account for less than one percent of China's stock investment with the share market being dominated by retail investors, searching for quick profits instead of long-term investment, Shanghai brokers said.

In new rules to be issued shortly, there will be provisions that require stock funds to invest at least 60 percent of their cash in securities, industry sources said.

(REUTER)

Japan, Philippines: A Study in Contrasts and Broken Stereotypes

MANILA, Philippines -- When cholera broke out in Manila in September, the city offered its citizens money for bringing in dead cockroaches. So naturally a new industry was born: roach-farming.

At a dollar for 150 dead roaches, it's hardly the growth industry that would have impressed the Pacific rim leaders who gathered here last week for their annual trade summit.

But in its small and quirky way, it's a reminder of the ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit that is thriving in the Philippines these days -- a spirit that the government was keen to demonstrate during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

The difference between this summit and last year's in Osaka supports many of the stereotypes about Japan and the Philippines. But it also knocks some of them down and points up intriguing role reversals.

The Osaka summit passed with the high-tech efficiency of a new Toyota Lexus. The transport to the various sites was impeccable. Schedules were met with relentless efficiency. The food never ran out, the toilets always had enough paper, the water coolers were always full.

This could hardly be said of the Philippines, where it's always wise to expect the unexpected. This is, after all, still a Third World country with staggering economic and social problems.

And yet...

Japan a year ago came across as the aging, slowing Goliath, while the Philippines is infused with the spirit of a David with nowhere to go but up.

Japan's gross national product is well above the sum total of all the other Asian members of APEC.

Yet the world's second biggest economy is in a prolonged recession, struggling throughout this decade with the aftermath of a "bubble" period of easy credit that fueled rampant land and stock speculation and led Japanese to expect endless growth.

Its projected 1996 growth is a measly 2.5%.

The Philippine economy grew more than 6% this year, and as the summit approached, it reveled in the judgment of foreign experts that what was once "the sick man of Asia" is about to become its next "tiger" economy.

The Osaka summit was presided over by Tomiichi Murayama, then the latest short-term prime minister to pass through the revolving door of 1990s Japanese governments. the 71-year-old socialist, soon to be unseated, came across as a weary man hoping for nothing more than a quiet, uneventful summit.

This year it was the Philippines, better known for its dictators and military coup attempts, which was radiating political stability under Fidel Ramos, the cigar-chomping, self-assured ex-general whose reforms during his four years as president have unshackled the Philippine economy.

It's risky to generalize too much. Japan, for all its political instability, has far deeper democratic roots than the Philippines, where democracy is still shallow and fragile.

Japan's biggest exports are cars and electronics, while the Philippines' is people -- nearly 6 million migrant workers who send home $6 billion a year and are condemned to spend years away from their families because there are no jobs for them at home.

Moreover, Japan, in the eyes of many experts, has reserves of economic strength which, with a thorough reform of its highly regulated system, could recover its former glory.

Ryutaru Hashimoto, Japan's fifth prime minister since 1993, has made bold moves to revive the economy. But even in its doldrums, Japan's per capita gross national product is $41,000 a year, 38 times greater than the Philippines'. Japan's population is only double the Philippines', but its exports are 23 times greater.

Just look at the traffic in Manila for an insight into the pervasiveness of Japanese hand-me-downs: cars slapped together in backstreet workshops with Japanese used parts; second-hand Japanese buses with steering wheels and doors crudely converted to left-hand drive.

But these ingenious contraptions, like those roach-collectors, bespeak a vigor which Japanese Trade Minister Shinji Sato fears his country is losing.

"Their drive reminds me of Japan after the war when we going through a period of high-speed growth," Sato said in an interview.

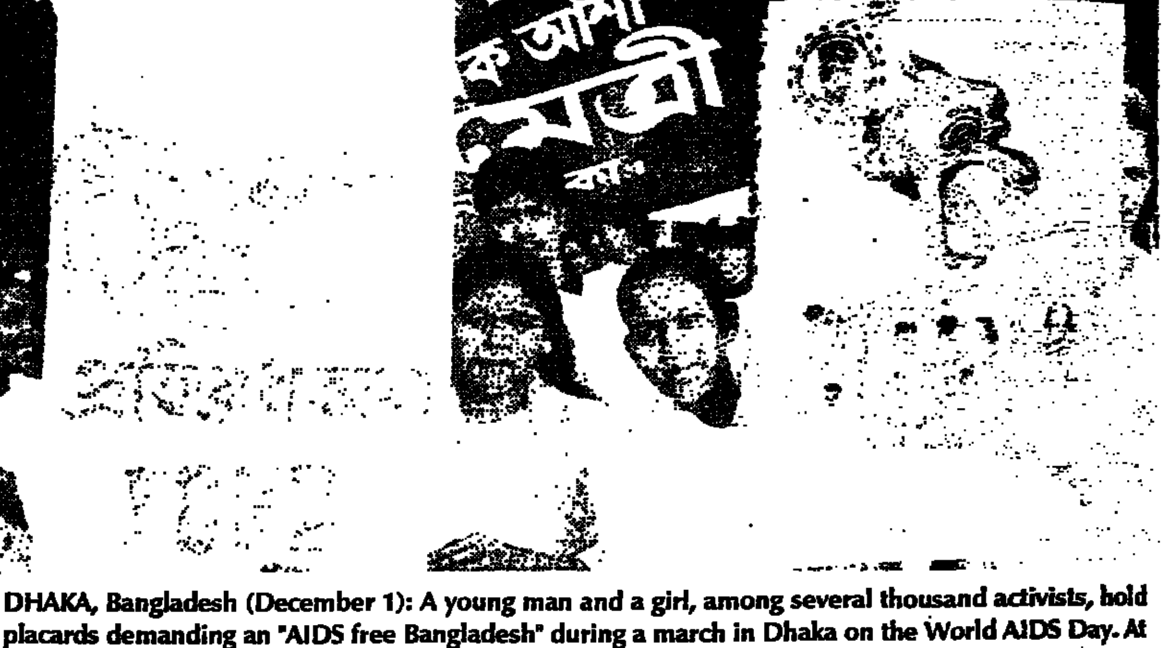
In town for the summit, the son of Eisaku Sato, Japan's greatest post-war prime minister, spoke of a "malaise" that was slowing his country, and of people putting their own selfish interests above those of the nation.

"The reason that Japan grew so much, historically speaking, is that we had a goal as a nation," he said in an interview. Now he sees "spiritual barrenness", and "loss of national purpose".

(AP)

Japan a year ago came across as the aging, slowing Goliath, while the Philippines is infused with the spirit of a David with nowhere to go but up.

Even in its doldrums, Japan's per capita gross national product is $41,000 a year, 38 times greater than the Philippines'. Japan's population is only double the Philippines', but its exports are 23 times greater.



DHAKA, Bangladesh (December 1): A young man and a girl, among several thousand activists, hold placards demanding an "AIDS free Bangladesh" during a march in Dhaka on the World AIDS Day. At least 74 AIDS cases have so far been detected and 10 full blown AIDS patients have died in Bangladesh. Experts have warned that although the number of AIDS cases was low here compared to neighboring India and Burma, there was no room for complacency as it was spreading alarmingly.

(AFP PHOTO)

Vietnam Sees Off Year of Disasters

HANOI -- "Vietnam will remember 1996 as the year of disasters," an official document concluded as the country's worst rainy season yet in terms of loss of life and property drew to a close.

Four typhoons, as many tropical depressions, about 30 cyclones as well as floods in the Red River in northern Vietnam and the Mekong in the south since July have caused 1,023 deaths, mostly children, latest figures show.

With nearly 120 people reported missing and 900 injured, the toll is set to rise. It is already higher than the 1,013 deaths recorded in 1985.

Since regular statistics were first kept in the early 1970s, 1996 is the blackest.

"This year has been exceptional on several accounts," said Nguyen Ngoc Dong, an official with the disaster management unit. "The calamities have been of diverse nature, they hit early, lasted a long time and affected nearly the whole of the country."

From the border with China in the north to the southernmost point on the Mekong Delta, adjacent to Cambodia, up to 80% of Vietnam has been battered by typhoons, cyclones, tropical depressions and monsoon floods over the past four months.

The water level in some regions this season beat all records since 1971 and at places since 1945.

Total damage is estimated to be worth $660 million. Vietnam's under-developed roads, bridges, pumping stations and dams were badly battered.

However, Hanoi has not asked for foreign assistance. The disaster management unit official avoided an explanation for this, saying, "The question must be addressed to the government."

For some people, it is a matter of national pride: Vietnam must rely on itself.

The only help available comes out of the few million dollars allocated by the government, emergency donations from embassies, foreign firms and non-governmental organizations.

Around 300,000 families need help because their homes are under three meters (10 feet) of water, they are threatened with food shortage and dengue fever is spreading.

Only families whose houses were totally destroyed are eligible for government assistance, that too a "paltry amount," Dong said. The state also gives $150 to families of the deceased, towards "burial costs."

Natural disasters cut Vietnam's rice harvest by nearly a million tons, with some northern provinces losing their entire crop. Miraculously, however, rice production has risen this year.

"The farmers in the Mekong Delta harvested early, before the flooding began," said Dong. In many areas, the summer/autumn harvest schedule was advanced.

Disturbingly, Vietnam's main rice bowl, the Mekong Delta, saw its third straight year of heavy floods. The region had previously only been seriously hit every five or six years.

Vietnam has charged countries upstream of the Mekong with aggravating the situation through massive deforestation. But that also holds for Vietnam.

Last month, Hanoi called for greater anti-flood coordination among members of the Mekong Committee which also groups Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. All were hit badly by flooding this year.

(AFP)

Four typhoons, as many tropical depressions, about 30 cyclones as well as floods in the Red River in northern Vietnam and the Mekong in the south since July have caused 1,023 deaths, mostly children.

Hitler's Personal Secretary Died in Italy

ROME -- Martin Bormann, the personal secretary to Adolf Hitler, survived World War II and died in Italy in the early 1950s, according to a report here recently.

The far-left *Il Manifesto* daily, citing a report by groups representing Italian resistance fighters, said Borman did not die from Russian artillery fire on August 1 or 2, 1945 in Berlin, as stated by a German court in 1973.

Instead, "Martin Borman died in Italy in 1952 from a serious illness," the paper said, citing the report. "He is buried under a false name in a cemetery in central Italy."

The report was based on research into archives in Germany and witness testimony, including that of Bormann's son, which led investigators to the hospital where the death certificate was issued under a false name and the cemetery where he is buried in Italy.

Cesare de Simone, who led the investigation, said Bormann arrived in Rome in early 1950 thanks to help from Odessa, the organization set up after World War II to assist former Nazi leaders and help them establish new identities.

His mission was to recover Nazi money and riches stashed in Italian and Swiss banks, including 117 kilograms of pure gold taken out of the bank of Italy in October 1943 by SS Commander Karl Hass and Herbert Kappler, the head of the Gestapo secret police in Rome.

Bormann, who disappeared on August 2, 1945, became Hitler's personal secretary in 1943, running the dictator's personal accounts and the Nazi party's finances.

Since his disappearance, various theories have surfaced over his fate, including one saying he was living in Argentina and another saying he had committed suicide.

He was sentenced to death in absentia during the Nuremberg trials.

(AFP)

Bloomberg, AFP Prepare News for Canalsatellite Television

PARIS -- The U.S. financial services and media group Bloomberg, and AFP are to broadcast a 24-hour news service through the French Canalsatellite digital channel from January 6, Michael Bloomberg said here recently.

As he spoke, Bloomberg TV France began broadcasting with two hours of news from 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. and from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Since July 1 it had broadcast two hours of programs by cable only.

Bloomberg, who founded the business bearing his name, accompanied by the president of AFP Jean Miot and the president of Canalsatellite, Bruno Delecour, told a press conference that the service would be developed progressively.

He intended eventually to broadcast his television services in 15 languages, including Arabic, Japanese, and in Portuguese for Brazil.

AFP provides news in six languages and Bloomberg said: "You will see a lot of Bloomberg and AFP everywhere in the world."

"I'm very optimistic because there isn't anything here (in France) that satisfies this demand for serious television. The serious market is for us," he added, referring to French and international economic and financial news.

"We will invest whatever is needed to be the serious television here. Our commitment in France is big," he said, explaining that he expected to attract high-class advertising. "Not beer, but Mercedes," he said.

Having begun an offensive in Europe from France in July, he was now beginning operations in Italy with the Italian news agency ANSA through transmission from January by the Italian digital service Telepiu.

He hoped to begin operations in Germany with AFP but had not yet reached agreement with a transmitter service. In Spain he was working with the Spanish news agency EFE.

The service is presented through different windows on the screen. On the right a journalist presents international and national news, direct commentary from financial markets, business news, interviews with politicians and business personalities, and items on sport and the high life.

The bottom of the screen shows market prices processed by Bloomberg and weather reports. The top left-hand corner shows sports results, general news, forthcoming events and horoscopes.

(AFP)

3,000 Reindeers Starve to Death in Siberia

MOSCOW -- Some 3,000 reindeers have starved to death in the Chukotsk Peninsula in the Siberian Arctic and a further 150,000 may perish because their pastures are icebound, ITAR-TASS news agency said recently.

Half the herd of 300,000 reindeers in the remote autonomous region of Chukotsk, on the Arctic Ocean in the far northeast of Russia, are at risk, the agency said.

The animals cannot feed because ice has covered about 70% of the pastureland in the area, where snow turned to ice after heavy rain last month.

Raising reindeer is the main economic activity of the Chukotsk region.

(AFP)





THOUGHT

Piety and abstinence are the roots of religion.
(Hazrat Ali (AS))

PRAYER

Noon..11:55
Evening....................................17:13
Dawn (tomorrow).......................05:22
Sunrise (tomorrow)....................07:00

Can Multiple Sclerosis Be Cured?

The amazing discovery in treating multiple sclerosis (MS) is illustrated in this account by Greg Paufler, a 37-year-old patient of upstate New York.

PART 2

Shortly after I returned home, and while I was bedridden, some friends came to visit and we smoked a few cannabis cigarettes. Afterward I felt better, but attributed that effect to the mild "high." My spasms also became less severe, but I gave the daily injections of ACTH credit for that.

Despite some improvement, I remained bedridden and soon began to feel the effects of chronic high-dose steroid therapy. I retained fluids and became bloated; I gained a 100 pounds in six weeks because ACTH made me ravenously hungry. I had sleepless nights; I started losing my concentration. My mental attitude was dismal and I became depressed. After three months of intensive therapy, my condition had barely improved. I could walk only when supported by my wife and a cane or walker.

The doctor told me I had to take

I walk completely unaided. I can actually run!

ACTH for another three months, but he was obviously concerned about the side effects. He warned me of the danger of a sudden heart attack or respiratory failure.

To reduce fluid retention, he prescribed a powerful diuretic, which he acknowledged could cause kidney stones or death from kidney failure. The steroid therapy was still not working and its adverse effects became worse. My weight rose from 170 pounds before taking ACTH to 300 pounds within several weeks after starting the second round of ACTH therapy. Breathing became difficult as fluids pressed against my lungs. My feet and legs were swollen. None of my clothes fit. I developed severe, intense depression

My doctor is amazed by the improvement in my symptoms. On a scale of one to 100, he rates my physical and mental health at 95.

marked by abrupt mood shifts. I would become profoundly upset for no reason; I would suddenly start to cry or have violent thoughts. After six months I felt that I had lost all control over my life. On rare, very good days I could shuffle across my bedroom by leaning against the wall and using my wife and a walker for support. Even then I could not maintain my balance or support my weight, and I often fell. Most of the time I was bedridden. My spasms continued, and my limbs were out of control.

At the end of the sixth month, I saw my doctor again and told him my condition was getting worse. He said that my MS was very severe and had progressed very rapidly; only ACTH could help. He recommended another three months and increased the dose by 50 percent. He also prescribed a sleeping pill and Valium to reduce my spasms.

I agreed to give ACTH another try, but changed my mind a couple of days later. I could not take it any longer. If the only choice was MS or this treatment, I would rather have the MS. When I stopped taking ACTH, my vision became blurred and I had episodes of tunnel vision. I could not focus and lost my ability to hear; the MS was attacking me in an entirely different way. My doctor became very worried and immediately prescribed prednisone, a powerful oral steroid. Again I received little therapeutic benefit but there were many adverse effects, this time even more intense; in less than a month I gained more than 80 pounds. But there was worse to come. Although I did not know it, the steroids were stripping my body of critically important potassium.

One day, while sitting in my living room, I realized I could not talk. I was semi-catatonic. One of my children walked up and spoke to me. I heard her but could not see her and could not respond, except by crying. My wife and daughter immediately took me to a hospital emergency room. I have no memory of the trip and did not know where I was when we arrived.

I remember being slumped in a chair alone, then surrounded by nearly a dozen doctors and nurses, all frantically talking. They asked me questions I am not sure I heard. When I tried to respond I could not speak. Medical records indicate that I nearly died that day; my body had almost no potassium in it. I was given massive injections and an oral potassium supplement.

This experience caused me to become deeply disenchanted with drugs, doctors, and hospitals.

Compared to the steroids, tranquilizers, and sedatives usually prescribed for MS patients, my discovery is remarkably safe and benign.

I stopped taking all steroids; although I continued to use Valium and other mood-altering drugs. Unable to walk, read, or be with my family, I began smoking cannabis to relieve the boredom, four to six joints a day.

One evening some old friends came to visit and we smoked several joints. When they rose to leave I stood up to say goodbye.

Everyone in the room suddenly

I realized that I had spontaneously stood unassisted, as if it were perfectly natural.

stopped talking and stared at me. I realized that I had spontaneously stood unassisted, as if it were perfectly natural.

I was stunned. My wife and our friends were stunned. I took a few unassisted steps before my legs, weak from atrophy, gave out. I had walked! I wondered if it was the cannabis, and asked my doctor, who dismissed the idea and insisted that cannabis had no beneficial effect on MS. My wife, too, was skeptical, but I kept on experimenting. I soon discovered that when I did not smoke cannabis my spasms were more frequent and intense. When I smoked it, my condition stabilized, then dramatically improved. I could walk unaided, and my vision was less blurred. But my doctor and my wife remained skeptical. In what I now realize was a foolish attempt to prove to others what I already knew to be true, I decided to stop smoking cannabis for six months.

As soon as I stopped I began to lose what I had gained. I had severe spasms in my back muscles. After four months I had lost control of my hands, arms, feet, and legs. My dose of Valium rose to 120 mg daily, and I began to realize that I was chemically dependent, an addict. I stopped taking Valium and suffered a severe withdrawal reaction from this "safe," "medically accepted" drug. I lost all interest in life; I was sleepless, restless, and constantly agitated; I fell into a dark depression; my mood shifts became even more erratic and pronounced; my spasm became intensely painful.

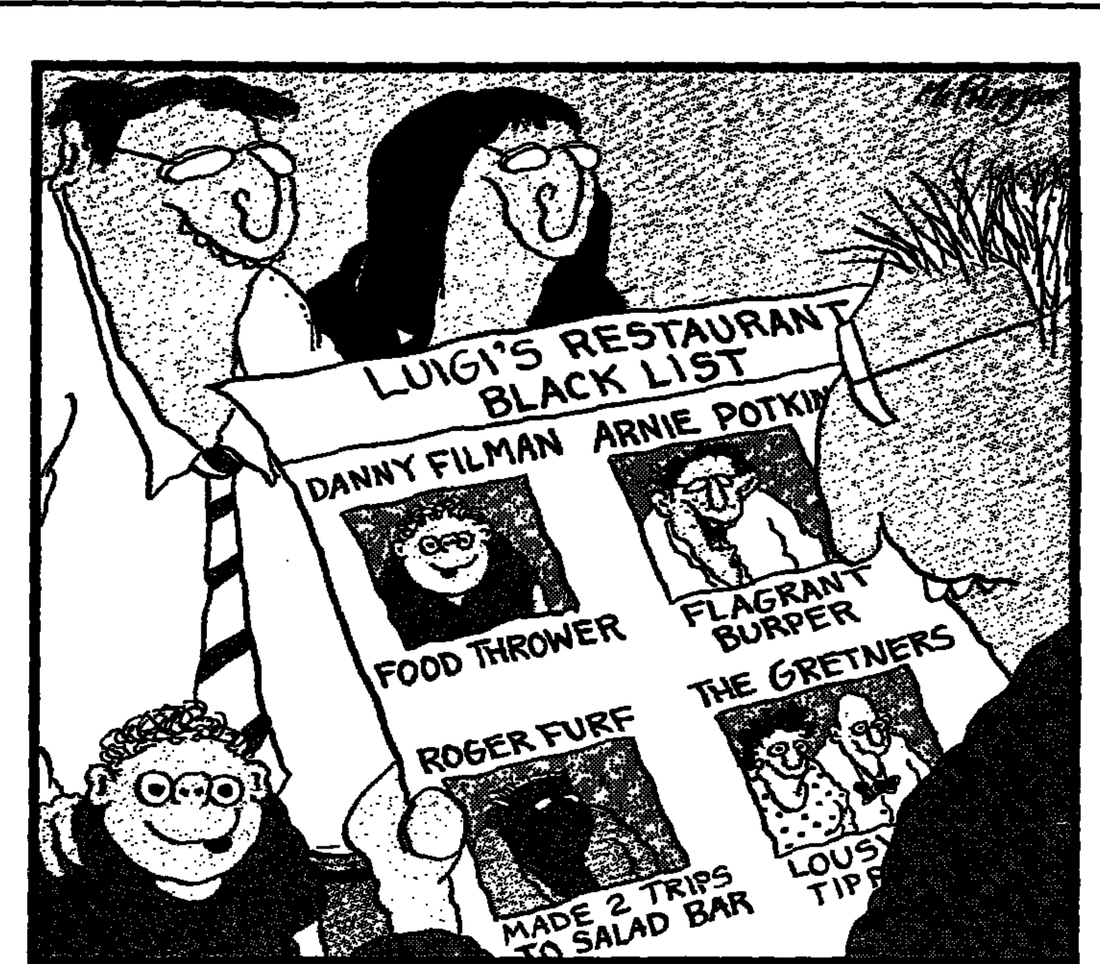
When I could no longer sit up, much less walk, I resumed smoking cannabis daily. Within a few weeks I was able to walk again unaided. I was soon walking half a block alone with some effort. I regained strength as I got more exercise, and my eyesight returned to normal. After six months all my symptoms had improved greatly. The spasms had vanished, and I had regained the ability to read, write, and walk. One evening I went out with my children and, for the first time in two years, showed them how to kick a soccer ball. I could kick a ball! I felt reborn.

(To be cont'd)

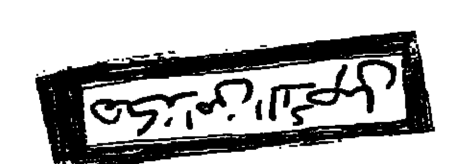
CLOSE TO HOME — BY JOHN McPHERSON

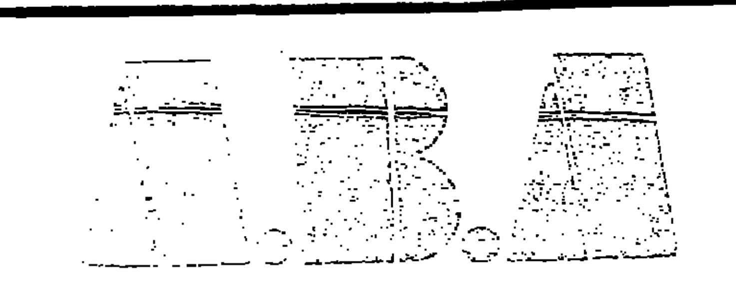


After losing the house to Al in the divorce settlement, Sheila used her gardening skills to carry out one final act of revenge.



Fortunately, an alert waiter spotted Danny's photo on the restaurant's blacklist.





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Clinton May Name Key Aides Soon

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Bill Clinton may announce this week his long-delayed decisions for his top foreign policy and national security posts, officials said.

The much-anticipated appointments for a new secretary of state, defense secretary and national security adviser for Clinton's second term were expected to be among his first announcements.

Clinton "has been considering them as a team, and my guess is that he may want to announce them as a team," White House spokesman Michael McCurry said.

The spokesman gave no precise timetable but predicted appointments would come "some time in early December."

Clinton, at a White House ceremony, declined to be more specific, saying: "When I have an announcement, I will make it."

Following his Asia-Pacific trip last month, the U.S. president said he took four days off with his family at the Camp David presidential retreat, resting his voice, and avoiding talking on the telephone.

"I tried to do a little work and found I simply couldn't make telephone calls," he said. "So, I had four days off ... and I expect to work hard this week. And I'll be making some announcements as they're ready to make. It won't be too long."



Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Defense Secretary William Perry announced shortly after Clinton's reelection they would not serve in a second term.

National Security Adviser Anthony Lake has made no announcement, but Clinton is likely to replace him in an effort to wipe the slate clean.

Aides have said that because the three top officials often work together, the president wanted to avoid personality clashes that have surfaced in prior administrations.

The current team functioned well because Christopher allowed the others to take the limelight, say aides.

Former Senator George Mitchell has long been considered the front-runner for secretary of state, although other names have been circulating, including UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright, former Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke, former Russian Ambassador Thomas Pickering and retiring Senator Sam Nunn.

While Pickering's chances are seen as rising, Albright could be a good choice because of pressure to have a woman in one of these top national security posts for the first time.

For defense, the most frequently mentioned name is retiring Senator William Cohen of Maine, a moderate Republican, a choice that would allow Clinton to fulfill his pledge of reaching out to the opposition.

Cohen, from the same state as Mitchell, is ideologically far from the new conservative leadership of the Republicans, who control both houses of Congress, which would make the choice politically easier for Clinton.

CIA director John Deutch has made clear his wish to become defense chief, which would mean one of the other candidates under consideration could head the Intelligence Agency.

Strobe Talbott, the current deputy secretary of state and a friend of Clinton since their Oxford days, is considered a likely choice for national security adviser. Another possibility is Lake's current deputy, Sandy Berger.

In all, Clinton is to name replacements for about half his cabinet for his second term. (AFP)

Hume Optimistic of IRA Cease-Fire Before Christmas

LONDON — Nationalist political leader John Hume, a key peace negotiator in the Northern Ireland conflict, held out hope that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) would call a new cease-fire before Christmas.

Xzi believe there is now a very serious chance of getting an unequivocal restoration of the IRA cease-fire," he said in an interview with BBC broadcaster David Frost.

Asked if there could be such a halt to violence before Christmas, the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) responded: "I think, if minds are applied to it, there is no doubt there could be."

The IRA ended a 17-month truce in February with bomb attacks in London. Since then the guerrillas have staged further attacks on the British Mainland, in Germany and in Northern Ireland itself.

On Friday, a huge bomb was found hidden in a field close to British Army barracks near the town of Armagh, on the border bertween Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

No one has claimed responsibility but Northern Ireland police said it contained more than a ton of explosive and was primed and ready for use.

Hume's comments were the most optimistic since British Prime Minister John Major rejected demands of the IRA's political wing, Sinn Fein, that it be granted immediate inclusion in current multiparty peace talks if the IRA called a new truce.

Major insisted that the IRA, which has fought a 25-year war to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, would have to call a definitive and verifiable cease-fire before Sinn Fein could be admitted to the five-month-old negotiations.

A Sinn Fein spokesman denied a report in London's mail on *Sunday Newspaper* that the IRA would announce a new truce in two weeks.

Calling the report pure fabrication, the spokesman said he had no knowledge of any imminent IRA cease-fire.

"I can assure you that if the IRA was going to call a cease-fire in two weeks' time, Sinn Fein wouldn't be announcing it today. There's no basis to this story," the spokesman said.

The newspaper claimed that five senior IRA officials, who are also Sinn Fein members, were visiting active units in Northern Ireland, Britain and Europe to instruct them to lay down their arms.

It said the cease-fire was agreed two months ago and Major's hardline position was designed to keep right-wing elements in Northern Ireland quiet until the cease-fire deal become public.

The IRA has traditionally called a Christmas cease-fire but doubts remained in British government circles that, even if the the guerrillas renewed their truce in two weeks, it would be meaningful and lasting.

"People have said to us 'What does happen if there is a cease-fire, how do you judge that it's unequivocal?' That's a question which has been around for some time, causing a certain amount of concern," Michael Ancram, Northern Ireland minister, told Sky Television News from Belfast.

"We look not just at the word but at the actions as well...such as expecting to see the ending of surveillance, the ending of targeting, the ending of all weapons development," Ancram said.

The Irish Republic government, Britain's partner in promoting the peace talks, has voiced concern that a new IRA truce would not grant Sinn Fein automatic entry to the talks. The issue is expected to dominate talks when Irish Prime Minister John Bruton meets major in London on December 9. (Reuter)

Japan Envisions a Huge Cut in State Civil Servants

TOKYO — Advisors to Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's have drawn up recommendation for the number of state civil servants to be slashed from 850,000 to 39,000, a newspaper reported.

The draft drawn up by officials of Hashimoto's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), says most of the 510,000 state-employed civil servants who work with local governments should be employed locally, the *Sankei Shimbun* said.

It also urges the privatization of the State Post Service, which employs about 300,000 civil servants.

The draft says the number of government ministries and agencies should be reduced from 22 to 10 by shifting control of housing, the environment, disaster prevention and other sectors to local government.

(AFP)

Burma Rulers Face New Challenge After Protests



RANGOON — Burma's biggest student demonstration since 1988 took the country's military rulers by surprise and was unlikely to be the last such challenge to the government, diplomats said.

Nearly 2,000 students of the Yangon (Rangoon) Institute of Technology (YIT) took part in a peaceful 20-hour protest which started on their campus before spilling into the streets of central Rangoon before sunrise on Tuesday.

"We were surprised by the number of students taking part in the protest, which was much bigger than the previous ones," one diplomat, who declined to be identified, said.

"They (the government's security forces) must have been caught unprepared and were not organized to set up roadblocks," he said.

A Western diplomat said the Rangoon government might also have been reluctant to deal harshly with the students at a time when it faced international criticism of its human rights record.

"It's partly a problem of organizing security forces and partly restraint," he said.

The United States and some other Western countries have accused the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) of widespread human rights abuses, attacked a recent crackdown on the prodemocracy movement led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and accused the government of involvement in the heroin trade.

The Western diplomat said although Rangoon had since returned to its normal pace, more student-led protests could not be ruled out in the next several months.

"You may not see another protest next week or next month but it will likely happen again," he said.

Students had said they were protesting against what they termed police manhandling of colleagues involved in a brawl with restaurant owners in October. Diplomats said at one point the protest displayed a clear political tone, however.

"It had a more visible political edge than the ones in October," the Western diplomat said. YIT students staged a smaller protest against the handling of the brawl in October.

The diplomat referred to banners calling for human rights, justice and fair government which did not feature in the October protest.

Another Western diplomat said for the first time since 1988, the YIT students demanded a right to organize an independent union on their campus.

Witnesses said some students were seen carrying a portrait of Burma's independent hero Aung San, father of Aung San Suu Kyi, early on Tuesday shortly before riot police cordoned off about 400 protesters near a junction close to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in central Rangoon.

After the October brawl, three students were temporarily arrested and two ordered not to attend classes.

A spokesman for SLORC said on Tuesday two policemen involved in the student arrests had been fired and given two-year jail sentences.

Some students protested that the police punishment was too lenient compared with a seven-year jail term facing convicted armed pick-pocketers.

Senior SLORC officials declined to confirm the number of students briefly detained on Tuesday but claimed all were released later after their identity papers were checked.

YIT campus sources said about 81 students who had participated in the protest reported back to their school by late Tuesday morning. They could not say how many were still absent.

YIT has been at the forefront of past student calls for political reforms. The nationwide student-led prodemocracy uprising in September 1988 was started by protests at the same campus and ended with SLORC crushing agitators, killing or imprisoning thousands. (Reuter)

Draft EU Treaty Calls For More Cooperation on Crime, Immigration

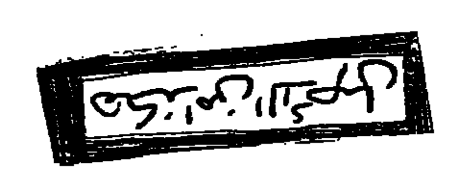
LONDON — A new draft European Union treaty, to be sent to EU leaders ahead of next week's Dublin summit, calls for increased cooperation in the fight against crime and in key areas of immigration and asylum, a press report said.

The *Guardian* said it had seen extracts of the Irish EU presidency draft which also called for greater majority voting by the Council of Ministers, extra powers for the European Parliament, and the inclusion of the objective of employment creation in the treaty.

Senior Irish sources told the paper that despite fierce British objections, there was striking evidence in recent weeks of "an increased willingness" by a majority of countries to transfer some responsibility to the EU for some aspects of immigration, asylum and the EU's external borders.

The sources added that "member states want the EU to be more active about cross-border crime, drugs and terrorism."

The European summit in Dublin is to take place on December 13 and 14. (AFP)



Researchers Hope Egg Sale Can Fund Own "Jurassic Park"

LONDON — No august university is backing them, no museum or entrepreneur has taken the plunge, but a motley grouping of scientists and fossil hunters hope to create a real-life "Jurassic Park" using mummified dinosaur eggs — if they can just raise the cash.

The eggs, discovered in China's Henan Province, are especially well-preserved. Unlike dinosaur eggs that decorate the mantel of many an enthusiast, these fossils contain dinosaur embryos so intact that not only are their tiny bones clearly visible, but some of the soft tissue survives.

Desperately strapped and unable to continue their research without more money, the assorted paleontologists and collectors are making a difficult sacrifice by auctioning off two of their precious eggs.

"We have outrageous debts and the money will go to clear those debts and fund the project," said Terry Manning, a fossil dealer and restorer who helped found the dinosaur embryo project.

The eggs, discovered in China's Henan Province, are especially well-preserved. Unlike dinosaur eggs that decorate the mantel of many an enthusiast, these fossils contain dinosaur embryos so intact that not only are their tiny bones clearly visible, but some of the soft tissue survives.

"They are two of the most complete and by far the best preserved eggs with embryos of any dinosaur to be discovered," Manning said.

"They represent the absolute miracle of the natural world's abilities to preserve its past for millions of years."

They also conceal what manning believes could be a scientific breakthrough. He has found evidence that the minuscule embryos went through several generations of teeth — before they even hatched.

"It appears that baby dinosaurs, during their development within the egg, shed their first-generation teeth and some of their second-generation teeth," Manning said.

"They hatched out wearing their third set of dentures."

Manning and the scientists who work with him have no idea why this might be. It is one of the reasons they are so keen to continue their research.

"We are kind of in limbo, because we've taken the science about as far as it can go without putting a lot more time into it. We've been trying to raise funds to do the research since 1995 without success."

Manning has struck a deal with auctioneers Phillips in New York to sell the two eggs, about the size of very large goose eggs, on December 14. He hopes to raise $800,000.

David Herskowitz of Phillips said the eggs were so unusual that he did not know how much they would sell for. "We were careful not to put a price tag on it," he said.

But he said each egg could bring anything up to $300,000.

"This is the first time that an embryonic dinosaur egg has been sold that has been studied and described by paleontologists," Herskowitz said.

"We are hoping that an institution will buy it such as a museum or a university — or that a philanthropist will buy it and donate it to a museum."

Manning first bought the eggs, nearly 60 in total, from a freelance trader in 1992, and developed unique methods for examining and preserving them. About 15 of the eggs have skeletal remains inside.

The two eggs to be auctioned are from the same nest and have been identified as belonging to a therizinosaur, a two-legged dinosaur that lived in the upper Cretaceous Period, 75 million years ago. It walked on two legs and had powerful arms with three clawed fingers on each hand.

DNA could be extracted.

Manning thinks the eggs are well-enough preserved to extract DNA from them. Such a delicate undertaking has never been documented as successful — although Chinese scientists claimed to have done so last year.

Extraction of dinosaur DNA from bloodsucking insects preserved in amber featured in Michael Crichton's best-selling novel and film "Jurassic Park".

In Crichton's fictionalized account, a wealthy entrepreneur hires scientists who use the DNA to clone living dinosaurs.

This is theoretically possible, says paleontologist Arthur Cruickshank, a collaborator on the dinosaur embryo project. But right now, there is no way to find out.

"We have colleagues who can extract DNA," he said.

"Somewhere in one of those eggs we have just got to be able to find DNA." Simply having dinosaur DNA to study would extraordinarily useful, as scientists know very little about the biology of the extinct animals.

"We are kind of in limbo, because we've taken the science about as far as it can go without putting a lot more time into it. We've been trying to raise funds to do the research since 1995 without success," Cruickshank added.

Ken Joysey, former director of the Museum of Zoology at Cambridge University, retired before he could press for the university to buy the eggs. "It's wonderful material. The best specimens age the best-preserved embryonic dinosaurs in existence," he said.

But getting a university to undertake such a project was "a lengthy and chancy business" that could take years, he added.

The four-member team put some of the eggs on display in 1995 in an attempt to attract funding, and still lend some of the collection to museums. Researchers at the University of North Carolina are, for example, making chemical studies of one.

Cruickshank and Manning said efforts to get government sponsorship had so far failed. Laboratories did exist that could do the needed research but the team wanted to do it themselves.

"We're not going to hand over our material to other people to work on, no matter who they are," Cruickshank said.

The buyers will be free to experiment on the eggs but it was considered more likely they would be used for display. Serious science, Cruickshank said, would require samples from many different eggs.

"We have put a lot of time in on these things. Just to hand it over and say 'Look here, old chaps, enjoy' — human nature ain't like that.

"Dammit, we want the fun. That's basically it. I'd be very fed up if I thought somebody else was going to work on it."

(Reuter)

Ice Detected on the Moon by Military Satellite

WASHINGTON -- A U.S. military spacecraft has detected ice on the moon for the first time in a discovery that could have far-reaching implications for the colonization of space, a Pentagon official said recently.

Radar waves bounced into a deep crater on the dark side of the moon picked up a deposit of ice that was "roughly the size of a small lake or pond and probably tens of feet deep," said Rick Lehner, a Pentagon spokesman.

Based on the density of the formation, the probability that the ice was formed from water was 90%, he said. Ice can also be formed from gas.

The find -- the first time ice has been detected on the moon -- opens the door to human habitation of the moon, according to Lehner.

"You could use the water for hydrogen and oxygen for breathing, for potable drinking water, for manufacturing spacecraft fuel which would make it much more economical to send spacecrafts to the moon in the future and use it as a filling station, so to speak," said Lehner.

"This is all obviously an early analysis," he said, adding that he did not know how NASA or others would use the discovery.

The lunar ice was discovered in 1995 by the Clementine, a military spacecraft, but had been kept under wraps for nearly two years.

"It took very long time to analyze the data and to establish some form of consensus on its implications, and apparently the consensus is, 'yes, it is ice'," Lehner said.

The Clementine was launched two years ago to conduct experiments associated with the U.S. "Star Wars" missile defense programs.

In the process of conducting the experiments, the spacecraft targeted the surface of the moon with sensors, cameras and radar waves, taking the first pictures of the South Pole on the dark side of the moon.

It did not find any sign of water until at least four months into the mission, when the Clementine began probing what Lehner described as the deepest crater in the solar system.

"This particular crater is about 250 kilometers in circumference and it's about 13 kilometers (eight miles) deep which is as deep as Mount Everest is high. So it's a big damn hole," Lehner said.

"At the bottom of this crater the radar images showed the presence of an ice formation which is the first time its ever been discovered on the moon," he said.

There may be other craters on the South Pole, where temperatures are near absolute zero at minus 20 to 230 degrees Celsius, with similar ice formations, Lehner said.

(AFP)

Astronauts Disappointed by Mystery Hatch Failure

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. -- A jammed hatch that forced cancellation of two planned spacewalks from the shuttle Columbia was a setback for space station construction planning, two shuttle astronauts said recently.

In an interview with the Cable News Network, astronauts Tammy Jernigan and Tom Jones, who were unable to leave the shuttle when the airlock hatch to the cargo bay stuck closed on Thursday, expressed frustration and disappointment that they were not able to complete the planned spacewalks.

"I think certainly that we are feeling some combination of disappointment at the failure of the hatch, but yet pleasure in being part of this mission that's been in every other way very successful," Jernigan said.

NASA cancelled the two scheduled spacewalks on Saturday when it became apparent that engineers would not be able to immediately solve the mystery of the stuck airlock hatch. It was the first time in the 15-year history of the shuttle program that astronauts encountered problems with the hatch.

Columbia's 16-day science mission was scheduled to end on today with a landing at Florida's Kennedy Space Center, but NASA was deciding about whether to extend the flight by one day so a U.S.-German orbiting observatory, released from the shuttle on November 19, could make further observations.

The Orfeus-Spas telescope, which was trailing Columbia by about 26 miles (42 km), was studying interstellar matter in an effort to learn more about the life cycles of the stars.

Jernigan and Jones had intended to make two space walks to practice construction of NASA's planned international space station, which is due to start next November. They had planned to test various tools and an 18-foot (5.5-meter) crane needed to install large components of the NASA-led, 13-nation space station.

The two spoke about the hatch problem on Monday for the first time since cancellation of the spacewalks, for which they had trained for 10 months. They spent two hours in the airlock trying to free the hatch before finally giving up.

"Initially I thought we just had a sticky hatch and their was an indication that we'd have to put a little more elbow grease into it," said Jones.

NASA investigators initially suspected the problem could be with the door's latching mechanism, which is located outside the cabin, or that it had become misaligned with its frame.

Jernigan said that the gearing on the inside hub of the hatch was also a potential problem area and expressed confidence that NASA engineers would get to the bottom of it once Columbia returned to Earth.

Jernigan, Jones and astronaut Story Musgrave spent some time early on Monday in the shuttle's middeck area successfully using a tool that would have been tested during the spacewalks. The battery-operated "power grip" tool was used to remove bolts in a simulation of space station assembly techniques.

The hatch failure and scrubbed spacewalks crimped astronaut training for construction and maintenance of the space station, the astronauts said, but better to solve the hatch failure now than later.

"Certainly it is a bit of a setback," Jernigan said. But "NASA will figure out a way to get the information they need to successfully construct the station."

"Every now and then it's good to know, to be reminded, that life has some surprises," Jones said. "The fact that our hatch failed on this flight is a good reminder that space flight's a complex business."

(Reuter)

White House Honors Shannon Lucid

WASHINGTON -- Astronaut Shannon Lucid, who set the women's record for the longest stay in space, received the Congressional Space Medal of Honor at a White House ceremony recently.

Lucid, 53, spent 188 days circling Earth earlier this year including several months on board the Russian space station Mir.

"This is the kind of partnership that we are working hard to build between our two nations," President Bill Clinton said as he stood in the Oval Office with Lucid and Russian Ambassador to the United States Yuli Vorontsov.

Lucid's mission "did much to cement the alliance in space we have formed with Russia," Clinton said.

Clinton used the ceremony to restate his determination to "keeping a strong space program, to keep the shuttle flying, to move forward the international space station, to develop the X-33, which will replace the shuttle (and) to continue robotic exploration of Mars and the solar system."

A U.S. space probe, the Mars Pathfinder lifted off in the early hours on Wednesday. It is set to land on Mars in seven months.

Clinton also said that he was "thrilled" by reports of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's successful recovery from his November 5 heart bypass surgery.

Lucid, a biochemist specializing in the effects of weightlessness on the body, is the first scientist and the first woman to receive the honor given by Congress on the recommendation of the U.S. space agency NASA.

Returning to Earth on September 26 aboard the shuttle Atlantis, she set a record for the longest stay in space for an American, breaking the 115-day mark set by Norman Thagard.

She also set a record for women, surpassing the one set by Elena Kondakova of Russia, 169 days.

Launched on September 16 for its fourth rendezvous with Mir, Atlantis allowed lucid to change places with astronaut John Blaha aboard the space station. Blaha is set to remain in space for four months.

In a brief speech, Lucid said her flight "was a story of two nations, two great space-faring nations that cooperate together and work together. And it's just a foretaste of what can happen in the future."

(AFP)

Earthquakes Threaten Nearly Half of Italy

ROME -- More than 45% of Italy is at risk from earthquakes, according to a government report published recently.

More than two-thirds of this area is in the south, including Calabria at the toe and the Island of Sicily, but the eastern alps on the border with Austria and Slovenia as well as the Appenine Mountain chain which forms the country's spine are also threatened.

The report by the Civil Defense authorities said that while some 40% of the population lived in the threatened areas, only 35% of their homes were built to the required protective standards.

In the past 200 years earthquakes have killed some 150,000 people in Italy.

The report was published to coincide with a public awareness campaign, including the distribution of information by direct mailing, advertising and audiovisual programs in schools on what to do in case of earthquake.

As if to mark the occasion, a small quake measuring 3.4 on the Richter scale was recorded Monday in the area of Mount Etna in Sicily, causing no damage.

(AFP)



Tunnel Dwelling Kids Get Safe Place on Mexican Border



NOGALES, Mexico — Half a block south of the U.S.-Mexican border, a brightly painted building stands in the shadow of steel and wire fences designed to keep out illegal Mexicans.

Bars cover the windows of Mi Nueva Casa — Spanish for my new house — and the doors are locked to adults. But the six-room building is open to any child who wants a plate of beans and rice, a change of clothes or a place to rest for a few hours.

Volunteers on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border created my new house to give a group of homeless children somewhere to go.

Previously as many as 150 boys and girls aged six to 18 lived in two tunnels that run beneath the international border between the towns of Nogales in the U.S. state of Arizona and Nogales in the Mexican state of Sonora.

The tunnel dwellers ruled the streets near the tunnel outlets two years ago. The kids regularly robbed people along Grand Avenue, the main drag in Nogales, Arizona. They also plundered other Mexican nationals who use the tunnels to illegally cross the border, according to police.

The homeless children, all Mexican citizens, stole additives, spray paint and other vapor-releasing substances in an endless effort to stay high.

The young toughs stabbed and pistol-whipped people, sometimes in broad daylight, sometimes in front of police. They also killed two people, including one of their own, a 15-year-old who was stabbed to death by a 13-year-old in a fight, police said.

As many as 150 boys and girls aged six to 18 lived in the tunnels. Since a rash of beatings and stabbings in 1994, efforts by community leaders on both sides of the border have reduced the number of children living in the tunnels.

That number has probably also fallen partially because U.S. police have been raiding the tunnels regularly since mid-1994. Generally, five or six officers wearing bullet proof vests and armed with semiautomatic guns carry out predawn raids.

"I would say probably half our clientele still frequent the tunnels," said Gilbert Rosas, the executive director of the home.

"They can't go on the streets because they'd be arrested for being vagrants. They can't go back home, because their home is pretty bad. So they go back in the tunnels," he said.

The dark 50-year-old sewers run seven meters (20 feet) below the dusty streets of the border towns. They are about two kilometers (one mile) long, seven meters (20 feet) wide and three meters (11 feet) high.

Murky waters — rain, raw sewage and garbage — ooze north to the United States.

U.S. residents call the kids "tunnel rats" while Mexicans call them "bajadores," or "undergrounders."

Social worker Cecilia Guzman calls them troubled.

"We want to help them get ahead, to help them have a future, because right now, they are kids without a future. They are kids who have been rejected by their families, by society, by everybody. Perhaps tomorrow, in the future, society will not reject them," she said.

An undetermined number of the tunnel dwellers still wander the streets on the U.S. side, panhandling and stealing anything of value. But, by most accounts, they are not the brazen thugs they once were.

Many of the kids have suffered brain damage or other health effects from the gasoline additives, spray paint, crack cocaine and other drugs, according to administrators of the safe house. The majority of the tunnel rats are runaways. Others are castaways. School and jobs are out of the question for all but a few.

Five to 25 kids a day drop by Mi Nueva Casa. Volunteers at the house teach reading and writing, math and other basics. In addition, they can learn computer skills, arts and crafts, music, basketball and volleyball.

One girl, who says she is 15, is one of the tunnel-dwellers. She wants to get a factory job.

"I plan to start working so my child won't do the same thing I'm doing now," she says.

(AFP)

Humanitarian Commander Cites Dangers in Eastern Zaire

ENTEBBE, Uganda - Rebel fighting in eastern Zaire is changing very quickly and could be "extremely dangerous" to any force attempting to aid refugees, the commander of a multinational relief force said Tuesday.

Canadian Lt. Gen. Maurice Baril, organizing aid for Rwandan refugees from his base at Uganda's main civilian airport, said in an interview that 13 countries have promised air assistance for the effort to aid Rwandan refugees stranded in rebel-held territory.

He said the multinational force will increase to 460 in the next 10 days, in addition to the 300 U.S. troops who are operating separately from Entebbe.

The force's headquarters will be moved 34 kilometers (21 miles) north to Kampala, the Ugandan capital, because "I don't think it's right to invade the main international airport of a country," Baril said.

Entebbe, with its Hercules and P-3 Orion aircraft, and personnel striding across the Tarmac in Khakis and Fatigues, looks more like a military base now than a civilian airport.

The government of Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko was "very upset that i had made contact with the head of the rebel force in eastern Zaire, but I had warned them that I would do that," said Baril, who last week toured part of rebel-held eastern Zaire.

"In a humanitarian operation we always coordinate with whoever tactically holds the ground. The intention was not to legitimize the (rebel) regime. I was just worried about the safety of our troops and the safety of the refugees."

The fighting "is very, very fluid," Baril said. "It's shifting very quickly. Whenever there is a confrontation it's always extremely dangerous, especially in a place where command and control and communications may not be the state of the art and you have soldiers who are young. ... there are a lot of boy soldiers in there."

He said there was no political or military side to the aid effort, and that the UN mandate would be observed. "Certainly we will not go beyond the March 31 mandate," he said.

Although the long-discussed international force has not yet come together as a single entity, Britain and the United States have been flying reconnaissance missions over eastern Zaire.

The Canadians, who flew cholera vaccine to Tanzania for refugee camps on Sunday, were flying a cargo of water and plastic sheeting to Mwanza, a Tanzanian port at the south end of Lake Victoria, on Tuesday. The supplies will go by road to the refugee camps northeast of Kigoma.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees estimates there are 146,000 refugees from Rwanda,

(Contd on Pg.15)

Zaire Crisis to Feature in Franco-African Talks

OUAGADOUGOU — A draft declaration on the crisis in Africa's Great Lakes region, including support for the inviolability of Zaire's borders, will be put to the 19th Franco-African Summit opening here Thursday.

The statement was drawn up in 12 hours of preparatory talks by ministers of participating countries which ended late Tuesday.

Ablasse Ouedraogo, foreign minister of host country Burkina Faso, said the declaration expressed concern at the situation in the region, where large areas of eastern Zaire have fallen into the hands of Tutsi-led rebels who Kinshasa says are backed by Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.

The statement "confirms the inviolability of frontiers," Ouedraogo said, adding, "There is no question of redrawing any territory."

In Paris on Tuesday, Deputy Foreign Ministry Spokesman Yves Doutriaux warned that anything that contributes to the destabilization of Zaire could have dramatic consequences for the whole region and continent.

He said that the "principle of unity, (territorial) integrity and sovereignty for Zaire should be rigorously upheld by the international community".

France would defend this principle "diplomatically and politically" and it will be discussed at the summit, Dutrioux said.

Most African leaders have kept an embarrassed silence about the crisis unfolding in Zaire's Kivu region bordering Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.

Zaire's Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo — President Mobutu Sese Seko is convalescing on the French Riviera from an operation for cancer — hopes for support and a show of solidarity from the other French-speaking countries.

At a regional conference in the Congo capital of Brazzaville Kengo called for the rapid deployment of a multinational humanitarian force to help "a million Rwandan refugees" in eastern Zaire.

He also accused Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda — all to be represented in Ouagadougou — of aggression against Zaire aimed at setting up a "Tutsi empire", backed by "powerful lobbies" interested in the wealth of the region.

A declaration reaffirmed "Zaire's territorial integrity in

(Contd on Pg. 15)

International Donors Urge Vietnam to Speed Up Reforms

HANOI — Vietnam will come under pressure at a meeting of international aid donors in Hanoi this week to put right its growing current account deficit and improve state sector efficiency.

The two-day conference from Thursday will be marked by a greater sense of urgency for the need to address pressing issues that could derail the country's plans to grow annual at nine or ten percent in the next five years.

The World Bank, which will chair the meeting of 24 countries and four international agencies, wants to see Vietnam come up with a "gameplan" said Bradley Babson, Vietnam chief representative.

"They have ambitious projects which aren't achievable without reform. They can't achieve nine or ten percent growth without a structural adjustment of the economy," he said.

A European diplomat who will take part in the conference said he is particularly concerned with the alarming rise in Vietnam's external debt that is being used to finance inefficient State Owned Enterprises (SOES).

"The trade deficit is nearly 20 percent of GDP. There is a fear that resources are being used too much for SOES," he said.

Babson said Vietnam will need about $2 billion in official development assistance pledges this year to support the government program, less than the 2.3 billion donors pledged in 1995.

To date donors have promised about $6.1 billion since multilateral aid to Vietnam was resumed in 1993.

However disbursements have been slow due to Vietnam's labyrinthine bureaucracy. For example less than two percent of the $2.03 billion pledged by Japan, Vietnam's largest donor, has been handed over so far.

Mounting concern over Vietnam's ability to sustain its current nine or ten percent growth in gross domestic product was expressed in hard hitting report released by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report in advance of the conference.

It describes Vietnam's "potentially serious problem in sustaining the current pattern and pace of growth is the high and growing trade and current account deficits."

In the first 10 months of this year, Vietnam's trade deficit was $3.49 billion, compared to an estimated GDP of $24 billion for 1996.

This is exacerbated by an alarming increase in debt related to the financing of foreign direct investment, the report says.

However Babson said linking aid to stiff conditions was not the best way to bring about desired changes.

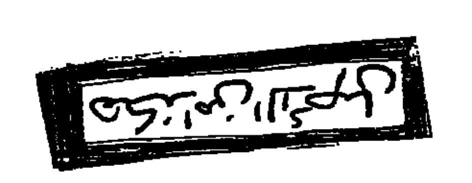
"Our task is not to force reform on the Vietnamese but to guide them," he said.

Babson said the World Bank is urging reforms to "level the playing field" that is overwhelmingly tilted in favor of state enterprises.

Coupled with this is the need to liberalize trade to force inefficient state firms to compete internationally.

Donors are likely to express disappointment with the glacial pace of privatization. On 10 of the roughly 6,000 state-owned enterprises have sold their shares, said Robert Glofcheski, author of the UNDP report.

(AFP)



Zaire Conflict Spreads, Army Abandons More Towns



BUKAVU, Zaire — The conflict in Zaire was spreading as rebels who now say they want to bring down the government seized more territory and claimed to have entered the eastern region's biggest town.

The embattled government denied that the rebels had taken parts of Kisangani, the site of a major air base, but admitted the loss of two other towns in week-end battles near the border with Uganda.

Fighting has been intensifying since more than half the Rwandan refugees who had fled to Zaire returned to their own country two weeks ago, going a long way to removing the original cause of the Zaire fighting.

The Rwandan-backed ethnic Tutsi rebels, originally immigrants from Rwanda, took up arms in October to fight for citizenship rights in Zaire and have seized a strip of territory in eastern Zaire.

But the crisis now appears to have entered a new phase, with rebel leaders saying their objective is to overthrow the Kinshasa government led by ailing President Mobutu Sese Seko, who has held power for 31 years.

An all-out rebel assault on Zaire's central government could further complicate plans for multinational military intervention to help refugees still trapped in Zaire.

The rebels said on Monday they had captured towns at the northern and southern ends of a front 400 km (250 miles) long and had penetrated parts of the regional capital Kisangani.

The government firmly denied rebels had taken Kisangani, which lies 500 km (300 miles) northwest of Goma.

"They are dreaming," government spokesman Boguo Makeli said in Kinshasa, the central African country's capital. "I deny categorically that they have taken the town."

Commander John Kabunga, senior aide to rebel leader Laurent Kabila, told Reuters in the town of Goma in eastern Zaire that rebel forces had reached Kisangani from the east by bypassing a town where they had encountered difficulties.

"Parts of our forces are now in control of parts of Kisangani. We went there by bypassing the town of Walikale, which is still giving us problems," Kabunga said.

Aid workers who flew from Kisangani at about midday on Monday said in Kinshasa there had been no sign of the rebels and they would be surprised if guerrillas had entered Kisangani unnoticed. But they said Kisangani was extremely tense.

They said a military plane had brought in the bodies of soldiers killed in Beni, raising tension among soldiers in Kisangani.

Laurent Kabila, leader of the rebel Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation of Congo-Zaire, told reporters on Monday another conquest by his forces was Kamituga, a gold and diamond mining center 90 km (55 miles) southwest of Bukavu.

In Paris, Belgian Defense Minister Jean-Pol Poncelet slammed what he called the world's chronic indecisiveness in



dealing with the crisis created by the presence of refugees in Zaire.

"The chronic indecisiveness of the international community on how to intervene in the region of the African great lakes has unfortunately not given the West European Union a chance to show it was ready to act and that is regrettable," he said. (Reuter)



Poland Revives Famed Cavalry After 50 Years

WARSAW — Poland's renowned cavalry, which survived only in legend and song after the communists scrapped the last horse-borne regiments 50 years ago, is about to ride again.

The cash-strapped Defense Ministry has accepted an offer from an association of enthusiasts to fund the mounts, uniforms, training and equipment for 100 serving soldiers to form a ceremonial unit of dashing Ulan Lancers by next year.

The return of the horse has captured imaginations in a nation whose cavalry stamped its mark on European history, smashing the Turks at Vienna in 1683, hammering the foes of Napoleon Bonaparte, and stemming a Bolshevik advance in 1920.

"This will restore the living memory of our army's days of glory," said Parliamentarian Piotr Chojnacki, vice-president of the Cavalry Squadron of the Polish Republic Association.

"If the Polish army is known in world history, it is through the achievements of its riders," he told Reuters during a gathering of the project's supporters at the army's Stara Milosna Riding Club near Warsaw.

The cavalry played a highly-visible part in September 1939, when industrially-underdeveloped Poland, unaided by its allies, held out for nearly a month against German invasion while also being attacked by the Soviet Union.

Cavalry scrapped as relic of the past after World War II, Poland's new communist rulers, fearing the cavalry might remain loyal to prewar ideals they linked with the gentry class, echoed Nazi propaganda that the use of horses in 1939 had been a foolhardy, absurd relic of the past.

The stereotype of sabre-waving horsemen crazily attacking German tanks is rejected by historians, who say there were only isolated cases of cavalry trying to charge out of encirclement.

"It is quite unreasonable to accept such incidents as evidence for the mad courage, or for the technical incompetence of the Polish army as a whole," Britain's Norman Davies wrote in his history of Poland, "God's Playground".

The army used horses for mobility in a landscape with few roads, while fighting on foot with cannon and machine-guns, and although Poland sorely lacked mechanized armor and modern aircraft in 1939, its deployment of cavalry was not absurd.

But the communists disbanded the last two regiments in 1946.

"The farewell to cavalry was a huge drama for those officers," said association spokesman Stanislaw Ledochowski.

Many Poles have continued to ride for pleasure and sing old songs about young Ulans. — known as the "beautiful children" — courting village maidens or charging to glory.

The idea of reforming a cavalry unit was first proposed to Parliament in 1976, during communist rule, without success.

But even before the 1989 fall of communism, Poland began replacing Soviet-inspired military customs with its own, restoring the distinctive square uniform caps and endowing today's units with prewar colors and traditions.

Part of wider attempt to reclaim the past the limited, symbolic return of cavalry is part of this process, and of a wider attempt by Poland to reclaim its past.

The army, urgently modernizing to prepare for NATO membership due in 1999, is keen to avoid accusations of wasting scarce cash on fripperies and insists all costs will be met by the association, through personal and corporate donations.

Defense Ministry Spokesman Eugeniusz Mleczak underlined that all the unit's soldiers will get full army training and be available for other military tasks.

"The ministry is not paying anything above the cost of maintaining a soldier in any other unit," he said.

Asked whether horses might return to active, nonceremonial service he declared: "Absolutely not — nowadays when we talk about cavalry we mean airborne cavalry."

Members of the association, grouping retired officers, military riding clubs, sports riders and top politicians headed by its chairman Agriculture Minister Roman Jagielinski, also stress the practical benefits of the exercise.

They say the squadron will promote sports riding and boost the rural economy, as well as training future staff for services that still use horses, such as the police.

One estimate puts the cost of the first 100 mounts with all uniforms and equipment at about two million zlotys ($700,000). donations are said to be flowing in fast.

The soldiers will be picked in January and tough training, will partly be run by prewar riding masters.

Dark green 1930s-style uniforms, with square caps, high boots and purple and white flashings, are being designed.

The association hopes to hand-over the squadron next year, maybe in time to take part in army day ceremonies on August 15.

Advocates of the scheme point out that by reviving the cavalry, Poland is merely joining Western countries such as Britain and France which maintain such units for state ceremonies.

But when lance pennants flutter and hooves clatter again in Warsaw's squares, rebuilt from its total wartime destruction by the Nazis, the sight will have a special significance. (Reuter)

IAEA Nuclear Inspection Plan Fails to Win Total Approval

VIENNA — Plans to boost the power of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to inspect nuclear facilities appeared to have failed to rally approval at a meeting of the UN body here, sources said Tuesday.

Diplomatic sources said the move was likely to be adjourned again by the IAEA's board of governors which met here in the presence of delegates of the organization's 35 member states.

The new rules are not now expected to be approved until next June, which means they will not take effect until 1998-1999 at the earliest because of delays in ratification, IAEA Spokesman David Kyd said.

Some opponents to the changes feared more inspections would further encumber the nuclear industry, which is already tightly monitored, and lead to leaks of industrial secrets.

Developing nations were concerned that the cost of new inspections would impact on the IAEA's budget for technical aid to their part of the world.

Other opponents complained that the proposed rule changes merely endorsed the status quo in not including the five declared nuclear powers — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — who are already exempt.

The new rules would allow inspectors to conduct inspections at shorter notice — 24 or 48 hours instead of at least one week under current rules — and to monitor a country's entire nuclear production capacity, as well as the on-site inspections of nuclear material.

Inspectors would be allowed to visit operating reactors, nuclear waste dumps, research centers and disused nuclear installations and plants that could be converted to produce enriched plutonium.

The IAEA's plan was first drawn up in 1993, and was aimed at combatting clandestine weapons development programs in certain countries.

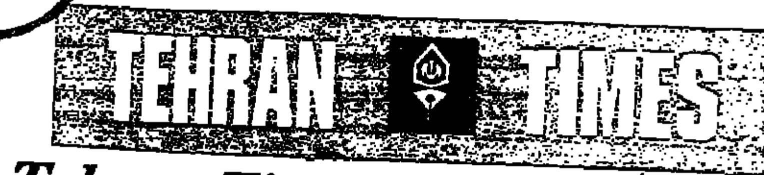
Stepped-up inspection powers were initially expected to be adopted by last year, but have hit constant delays.

In a gesture of goodwill, the United States, Britain and France have conditionally agreed to allow the IAEA to check their stocks of fissile material from dismantled nuclear weapons. Until now such inspections have always been carried out on a voluntary basis.

A new working group is expected to meet from January 20 to try to thrash out a compromise solution. (AFP)







Tehran Times Weekend Issue

THU., DEC 5; AZAR 9, 1375; RAJAB 23, 1417

The World This Week





International Spectrum

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World in Highlight

Wednesday, November 27

France, U.S. Attack Netanyahu's Settlement Policies



Both France and the United States have expressed their concern over comments by Israeli Premier Bibi Netanyahu pledging to ensure Jewish towns on the West Bank will grow and prosper 'forever'.

Belarussia Surrenders the Last of its Nuclear Missiles to Russia



The last Soviet-era nuclear missiles 'SS-25 Topol' loaded into special carriage were handed over to Russia at a ceremony attended by senior Belarussian and Russian officials in Lidia district of Belarus.

Milosevic Faces Further Mass Demonstrations



Beleaguered Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic faced a ninth straight day of mass demonstration in Belgrade over the cancelation of election results, while the opposition boycotted reruns of the polls.

French Truckers Reach Two Accords but Keep Up Pressure

Striking French truckers kept up the pressure with countrywide barrages in spite of an agreement with employers on two of the drivers' key demands.

Thursday, November 28

OPEC Keeps Production Ceiling Steady

OPEC ministers decided to maintain their oil production eiling, predicting they can hang nto recent high prices even though raq is trying again to get back into e market.

Major Says No Bargaining Over N. Irish Peace

Prime Minister John Major said that he would not bargain with he Irish Republican Army (IRA) ver a cease-fire to allow the guerllas' political wing Sinn Fein to ake part in Northern Irish peace alks.

Algeria's Constitutional Referendum Held

Algerians overwhelmingly approved a constitutional referendum to ban religion in politics and expand presidential powers. However opposition parties called the amendments a setback for democracy.

Friday, November 29

Bundestag Backs Its Government's Iran Policy

The German government won support in Bundestag (parliament) for its policy of 'critical dialogue' with Iran, defending it against an opposition attempt to toughen up Bonn's stance.

Int'l Criminal Court Passed Its First Sentence to Croat War Criminal for Muslim Genocide



The UN war crimes court handed down its first sentence condemning the 25-year-old Croat Drazen Erdemovic to 10 years in jail for acts of genocide against the Muslim civilians after Serb forces overran a UN-protected enclave last year.

Mother Teresa Well After Surgical Procedure

Mother Teresa underwent a successful X-ray test and surgical procedure following bouts of heart failure, an Indian clinic official said.

Romania Swears In as New President

Romania swore in its new conservative President in an unprecedented democratic transfer of power which finally sounded the death-knell of 50 years of communism.

Saturday, November 30

UN Experts Delay Inspection Mission in Northern Iraq

UN experts delayed a trip to Kurdish-held northern Iraq to inspect customs posts through which humanitarian aid is to arrive under the oil-for-food deal with the United Nations. No reason was given for the delay in the trip to Zakho.

Ugandan President Meets Multinational Force Commander

At the meeting with Canadian Commander, Lieutenant General Maurice Baril in Gulu, northern Uganda, Ugandan President Yaweri Museveni has pledged his support for the multinational force for Zaire. However, the president advised the Canadian General to concentrate on humanitarian aid and avoid being drawn into internal regional conflicts.

Israeli Policy Harming Normalization Process: Mubarak

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said that Israeli's hardline stance on the Middle East peace process has harmed the normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt and other Arab nations.

Burma Media Blast Clinton Slander

Burma's state-run newspapers said that U.S. President Bill Clinton was a destructive element who has slandered and insulted the country in his speech at Bankok's Chulalongkorn University at the end of a 12 day Asia-Pacific visit.

Sunday, December 1

South African Gold Exports to Dubai Surge

South Africa has exported 10.29 tons of gold to Dubai in the first 10 months of this year, up sharply from the 8.96 tons exported to Dubai for all of 1995, the World Gold Council announced.

Tibetans Police Scuffle on a Road in New Delhi



Some 100 Tibetans scuffled with police as they tried to block Chinese President Jiang Zemin's convoy at the end of his India visit. The dramatic protest led to a traffic jam at a road junction.

New Thai PM Sworn In by King

Former Army Chief Chaowalit Yongchaiyudh was formally installed as Thailand's 22nd premier at the head of an unwieldy six-party coalition government already showing signs of strain.

Sri Lanka to Sell Ex-President's Gold-Plated Bed

Sri Lanka will auction off luxury imported furniture including a gold-plated bed and several bedroom suites ordered by President Ranasinghe Pramadasa who was assassinated in 1993.

Monday, December 2

Volcano Erupts in Eastern Zaire, Refugees Not Threatened





A volcano has erupted in spectacular fashion north of Goma in eastern Zaire, but Hutu refugees remaining in the region are not in danger, witnesses and UN staff said.

China Proposes Close Ties With South Asia



President Jiang Zamin said China wanted to build a long-term relationship with South Asian nations and would never seek hegemony for itself.

U.S., Russia Clash Over NATO at Security Summit

Clear U.S.-Russia tension over NATO expansion clouded a summit of the pan-European security body the OSCE as it sought to agree plans for a new security architecture for Europe for the 21st century.

Tuesday, December 3

Okinawans Disgruntled with U.S.-Japan Action Program

Okinawa leaders expressed discontent at the plan drawn up by the Japanese and United States governments to reduce the U.S. military presence on the southern island.

U.S. Mars Launch Delayed



The launch of NASA's first Mars rover, Mars Pathfinder, was scrubbed early due to a software problem with a ground computer.

PNG Villagers execute Magistrate Accused of Rape

A village magistrate accused of raping a woman was lynched by the alleged victim's angry neighbors in Papua New Guinea's Western highlands police reported.

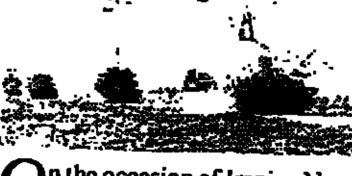
Iran Spectrum

A Glance at National Events

Iran in Highlight

Wednesday, November 27

Iranian Navy Ensuring Security in Persian Gulf



On the occasion of Iranian Navy Day, the Ideological Department of the Islamic Republic Armed Forces stated that Iranian Navy has a vital role in preserving stability and security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in addition to safeguarding the territorial integrity of their Islamic motherland.

Iran, India Support Peaceful Settlement of Afghan Crisis

At the meeting with the visiting Iran's Majlis Speaker, Nateq Nouri, the Indian Prime Minister, Deve Gowda said that his government fully supported the outcome of the Afghanistan Conference held in Tehran and that the Indian Government recognized the government of Rabbani as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.

Thursday, November 28

Iran Attaches Importance to Ties With African Nations



At the meeting with Tunisian Foreign Minister, Habib ben Yahiya, President Hojjatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani initially welcomed the expansion of bilateral relations stressing that Iran attached great importance to development of ties with western and eastern African countries.

Iran Awarded for Having Best Pavilion in Dubai

Iran's pavilion has been selected as the best pavilion at the 11th Autumn International Trade Fair held in Dubai from November 24-28.

Friday, November 29

Iranian Envoy Calls For Voting Against Resolution on Iran

Iran's envoy to the UN General Assembly, Hossein Rezvani said that the UN General Assembly Resolution on situation of human rights in Iran was not only a politically motivated move but in fact, it was a by-product of an unhealthy trend of hostility towards the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran-Turkey Border Security Subcommittee Starts Activity

A Subcommittee of Iran-Turkey border security cooperation started activity in Van Province of Turkey.

Saturday, November 30

Mohammadi Doubtful on Iran's Acceptance of UN Request

Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi expressed doubt that Iran once again would accept the request of the third committee of the United Nations General Assembly to allow the special rapporteur of the human rights commission to visit Iran

Besharati Calls For Islamic Unity

Interior Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati in a meeting with Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib ben Yahiya, said that Iran's foreign policy is for mutual respect and against interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Sunday, December 1

Majlis Speaker Limelights the Life of Modarres



At the unveiling ceremony of Martyr Modarres's statue at Baharestan Square opposite the old Majlis to commemorate his martyrdom anniversary, the Majlis Speaker, Hojjatoleslam Nateq Nouri said that Martyr Ayatollah Modaress was the great political figure who stood firmly against domestic bullyings and foreign despotism and consequently his works and services to the nation needed to be revived.

Monday, December 2

President Inaugurates Giant Bibi-Hakimeh Gas Project



A giant gas injection complex of Bibi-Hakimeh in Gachsaran located in the southwestern province was inaugurated by President Hojjatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Tuesday, December 3

Iran Russia to Form Joint Drilling Company

Iran and Russia have agreed to form a joint company to prospect for oil in the Caspian Sea.

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

Here's how to help make sure you do

I always assumed that some people naturally fall asleep more easily than others and that I was simply on the far end of normal. I sailed through the day on five hours' sleep and was in dreamland at night before my head hit the pillow.

Then up again without an alarm at 4:30 — a regular dynamo.

I also figured it was normal to doze off at concerts or shows, especially if I had eaten beforehand, and to nap during car, train and plane rides, or when I read in the afternoon. Then one day when various demands cut further into my sleep time, I found that my short-term memory was failing and I couldn't concentrate.

Not until I came across a report on sleep deprivation did I finally find out something was wrong. The report included a sleepiness quiz, and I flunked it miserably. The results suggested severe sleep disorder. Only then, once I started following some basic tips for a good night's sleep, did I get on the road to recovery.

Estimates are that 100 million Americans are sleep-deprived — a potential hazard to themselves and others. Some are compelled by their jobs to works at night: one survey found almost 14 percent of full-time workers have rotating shifts that disrupt their biological clocks. For most of us, however, the problem is attributable to TV, family responsibilities and an ever-lengthening workday — topped off by a desire to cram as much into life as possible. When something has to give, sleep is the usual silent victim — silent, until daytime sleepiness gets serious.

Although it's not known precisely how many ailments, accidents and lost productivity can be traced to sleep deprivation, research estimates the cost at billions of dollars annually. Says NASA researcher Mark R. Rosekind: "It doesn't matter how professional, how motivated, how well-trained or how well-paid employees are — we are talking about human physiological limitations."

Industrial disasters like the nuclear accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, the gas leak at Bhopal and the Exxon Valdez oil spill occurred at night under the eyes of workers who were supposed to remain alert long after their natural bedtime. Night workers also have higher rates of gastrointestinal and cardiovascular disorders than day workers.

Off the job, tired commuters — both day and night workers — are at risk for car accidents. Judging off quickly, especially college students. Data suggest that most collegians need ten hours a night but average only about six.

Two independent forces regulate our need and desire for sleep. One is our circadian pacemaker, or from the nature of many vehicular mishaps — like an absence of skid marks or evidence of swerving to avoid a collision — sleepiness is believed to play a role in many accidents, with estimates ranging from 60,000 to about a quarter-million. The U.S. Department of Transportation has estimated an average of 1500 fatalities per year due to drowsiness.

Sleep-lab and family studies strongly suggest that the amount of sleep each person needs to be alert during the day is determined by one's constitution, with a few people fully rested after five hours while others need ten. Although eight hours is the usual need, the average person gets only seven. And despite valiant attempts, people can't train themselves to need less.

Complicating matters, few of the sleep-deprived recognized their condition. People who deny being tired have been tested to see how long it takes them to fall asleep at varying times during the day. Given the opportunity to lie down and close their eyes, more than half drop biological clock, a brain mechanism trained by cycles of daylight and darkness. A normally functioning circadian clock, as measured by a cyclical drop in body temperature, would have us drowsy at midafternoon (siesta time), most alert a few hours before bedtime and sleepiness around five in the morning. The second force, our homeostatic drive for sleep, makes us sleepier the longer we remain awake.

Dr. Charles A. Czeisler, neuroendocrinologist at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital, studied the interaction of these two rhythms and concluded that the homeostatic drive prompts us to fall asleep most readily in the lat evening, *but it would cause us to* awaken after a few hours if not for the circadian sleepiness kicking in during the latter half of the night.

Czeisler and colleague Dr. Derk-Jan Dijk have shown that the only way to maintain the long period of sleep we need is to go to bed five to seven hours before the deepest trough of alertness. This, Czeisler says, "is precisely the problem for night workers, who try to sleep in the morning. They wake up after four hours, and even though they're exhausted, they can't sleep."

Czeisler advises 24-hour industries to lengthen the time workers are kept on the same shift before rotation, giving circadian rhythms a better chance to adapt. And if there's no bright lighting system in the workplace, he recommends moving workers from shifts starting early in the morning to those starting in the afternoon — and then to ones in the night. When evening workers are exposed to enhanced bright light, wear goggles on the way home and keep their bedrooms dark during the day, their internal clocks can be fooled into thinking day is night, enabling them to get more restful sleep at home.

Millions of Americans try to make up for lost sleep on weekends, but this doesn't seem to cancel the sleep debt entirely. A better plan is retire earlier, pushing up bedtime by 15 or 20 minutes each week until you're sleeping enough at night to eliminate daytime sleepiness.

For those who can't do this, the next best thing is a nap. "Many productive people take brief naps during the workday," says University of Pennsylvania sleep specialist David F. Dinges. Remarkable benefits have been observed from naps as short as 15 or 20 minutes.

Working with the Federal Aviation Administration, NASA researcher Rosekind scheduled sequential 40-minute naps for the pilots, copilots and flight engineers of commercial 747s over the ocean. The naps were to prepare them [for] descent and landing, the m[ost] hazardous segments of the flig[ht]. Napping crew members, who sl[ept] an average of 26 of the 40 minu[tes] were much more alert followi[ng] their snooze than non-nappe[rs]. They performed better, bringi[ng] clearer thinking and great[er] quickness to their tasks. Those w[ho] did not nap experienced almost fo[ur] times as many "microsleeps" — *naps lasting seconds, when t[he]* brain involuntarily dozes off.

The problem of not getti[ng] enough sleep is more serious th[an] many Americans realize. A[s] Dinges summarizes it: "The bra[in] sort of sputters when it's depriv[ed] of sleep. Even after just one nig[ht] without it, people have troubl[e] remembering things, responding t[o] signals and paying attention."

So figure out how much slee[p] you need, experts advise — an[d] then get it.

(Courtesy the Reader's Digest)

Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

* *Stick to a bedtime that gives you optimum rest.*
* Deal with worries before you try to sleep. Reserve 30 minutes in the early evening to jot down your concerns — and how to address them. Once you identify solutions, you'll be less inclined to fret.
* *Avoid caffeine after dinner.* Caffeine is a well-known cause of sleeplessness, found in cola, tea, cocoa, as well as in coffee.
* *Shun tobacco.* Nicotine can cause shallow sleeping and sleeplessness.
* *Have a healthful bedtime snack.* Try a small glass of milk and a piece of fruit. Experiments show that people sleep better if they aren't hungry.
* *Relax.* Some people work too hard at getting to sleep. If sleep doesn't come, read a book in bed or listen to music until you feel tired.

How Tired Are You?

For each situation listed below, use the following scale developed by Murray Johns to rate how likely you are to doze off (whether or not you intend to):

Would never doze 0
Slight chance of dozing 1
Moderate chance of dozing 2
High chance of dozing 3

— Sitting and reading
— Watching television
— Lying down in the afternoon to rest
— Sitting and talking with someone
— Being a passenger in a car for an hour's drive
— Being in a car while stopped for a few minutes in traffic
— Sitting inactive in a public place — a theater, for example
— Sitting quietly after a lunch without alcohol
— TOTAL SCORE

If you regularly sleep a minimum of seven hours nightly, a score of ten or more suggests at least a mild sleep disturbance serious enough to warrant medical attention. Totals above 16 almost always indicate a serious sleep disorder. If you're concerned about your score, talk to your doctor.

Entertaining in Style



Glazed Fruit Bread

You will need ...	12 oz. self-raising flour
	½ level teaspoon salt
	2 oz. castor sugar
	2 oz. walnuts, chopped
	2 oz. dates, stoned and chopped
Preparation time	2 rounded tablespoons malt extract
10 minutes	2 oz. butter
	¼ pint milk
Cooking time	2 eggs, beaten
1 hour	*For the glaze and topping:*
	3 tablespoons apricot jam
Oven setting	2 oz. icing sugar
335°F; gas mark 3	1 oz. walnuts
	4 dates, stoned and halved
	glacé cherries and apricots

Well grease a 2-lb loaf tin. Sift flour and salt into a bowl, add sugar, walnuts and dates. Gently heat malt and butter until butter has melted. Pour into center of flour mixture with blended milk and eggs. Mix to smooth, soft dough.

Turn dough into tin. Bake in a very moderate oven for about 1 hour.

To make glaze, heat jam slowly with a little water and spread over top of loaf. Place glacé or dried apricots down the center with a cherry in middle of each. Arrange walnuts and dates along either side. Mix icing sugar with 1 tablespoon water and trickle icing over top to give a criss-cross effect.

QUICK TIP



For a quicker finish, brush the top of the loaf with warmed honey or golden syrup and scatter with chopped walnuts.

Answers to Last Week's LOGIC

David comes from Epping. Bob comes from Falkirk. Eileen is from Cambridge and Arthur does not live in Bradford. So Arthur is from Daventry and Carol is from Bradford. Thus Arthur's surname is Monk. David's surname is Phillips, Eileen is Robinson and either Bob or Carol is called Norris and won £50,000. If David won £5,000 less than Bob and Eileen won £5,000, then Bob must have won £25,000 and David £20,000. As Arthur Monk did not win the top prize, he won £10,000 and Carol took the top prize. This means that Carol is called Norris and so Bob's surname is Osgood.

In summary: Arthur Monk from Daventry won £10,000, Bob Osgood from Falkirk won £25,000, Carol Norris form Bradford won £50,000, David Phillips form Epping won £20,000 and Eileen Robinson from Cambridge won £5,000.





Feature

Facets of Countries

Spotlight: Great Britain

NATURE'S FENCES

While meeting the practical need of enclosing land, headgerows gladden the hearts of nature lovers and twine through the nation's lore and verse.



Hedgerows make the landscape in most of rural England.

After World War II's privations, Britain began "grubbing up" hedgerows to increase farming acreage for national self-sufficiency. Today, however, the rate of hedgerow removal has slowed, thanks to ardent conservationists and government grants to farmers for maintenance and renovation.

The most common hedge plant, the wickedly spiked hawthorn, confines cattle on a Midlands farm in winter. Come spring, branches take on color and sprout a nebula of May blossoms. Birds act as landscape architects, planting wildflowers by dropping seeds from other fields.

Inside a bank, burrowing animals are safe from the owl and kestrel. Come summer, butterflies flit above a hedgehog, inspiration for the tiny washerwoman who did laundry for her animal friends in Beatrix Potter's "The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle."

For well over a thousand years, hedgerows have been a defining attribute of rural Britain, the stitching that holds the fabric of the countryside together. From a distance, as at Bulbarrow Hill, they give the landscape form and distinction. Up close they give it life, filling fields and byways with birdsong and darting butterflies and the furtive rustles of small mammals. The wildflowers that spill from their base—foxgloves, feverfews, buttercups, fleabanes—dust the air with scent and transform country lands into cottage gardens. Hedgerows don't merely enhance the countryside. They make it.

Unfortunately hedgerows have been disappearing at a rate that many find alarming. In England alone, roughly a quarter of the hedgerows—96,000 miles, enough to girdle the earth nearly four times—vanished in the forty years to 1985.

Until the 1950s most British fields were small and regularly rotated between crops and pasture. Hedges played a central role in containing and sheltering grazing animals. But with the development of modern fertilizers the need to rest the land was removed. Throughout much of lowland Britain, especially in the fertile, loamy flatlands of East Anglia, farmers sold off their livestock and turned to producing endless cycles of a single crop.

Today Cambridgeshire is the least wooded country of Britain—even Greater London has more woodland per acre—its few remaining hedges standing as forlorn relics. But much the same loss of loveliness has affected other areas as monoculture farming has spread across the countryside. The loss has been devastating, not just to beauty but also to wildlife. More than 800 kinds of plants, from the common cowslip to rare ferns and orchids, have been found in hedges or verges. And most of Britain's woodland birds use hedgerows at least some of the time, as do most of its small mammals.

No one knows exactly when hedgerows first became a feature of the British landscape. Parish records from well over a thousand years ago commonly refer to them, and archaeological excavations give clear evidence they existed in Roman Britain as early as the second century A.D. Older still are the hedge banks—rock and earthen barriers that are sometimes, though not invariably, topped with living shrubbery—on the Land's End peninsula of Cornwall. Dating from the Bronze Age, these banks are, as one historian wrote, "among the world's oldest artifacts still in use."

Despite the depredations of recent decades, hedges of considerable antiquity still dot the landscape.

Judith's Hedge, at a place called Monk's Wood, was planted by a niece of William the Conqueror sometime in the second half of the 11th century. Nothing about its shape or structure hints of its particular antiquity, but Judith's Hedge is very old indeed—as old as Windsor Castle, older than Salisbury Cathedral and York Minster, older in fact than most of the buildings of Britain. For 900 years, through the reigns of 40 monarchs, through the ages of Chaucer and Shakespeare, of Milton and Pepys and Defoe, Judith's Hedge has been quietly going about its business, marking the boundary of a little-known wood, providing a habitat for wildlife, lending a distinction to 400 yars of an essentially anonymous byway. (Courtesy of *National Geographic*, September 1993.)

Travelogue

Hua Hin and Cha-Am

PART I

The western shore of the Gulf of Thailand, from Cha-Am to Prachuab Khiri Khan, has long been a favorite part of the country for the Royalty of Thailand. In 1868, King Mongkut built the "Town of the Eclipse" near Prachuab Khiri Khan. It was built for one purpose: to house the hundreds of "farangs" whom the king had invited to witness the solar eclipse of August 18, 1868. The guest list ranged from French botanists to English merchants and foreign office dignitaries, American bankers, European engineers, and astronomers, arriving on steam ships from Bangkok and Singapore. The town took two weeks to erect, complete with pier and flagpole.

This lavish celestial affair lasted for one week. There were drama presentations, musicians, dinner parties, and elephant rides into the jungle. On the 18th, the eclipse occurred according to King Mongkut's prediction; on the 19th, the picture-taking session was done; and on the 20th, the town was packed up and disappeared like an enormous sand castle at high tide. For the next 42 years, the area was left to the fishermen who inhabited the coast and the roving bandits who hid in the jagged, dragon-spined mountains of the interior.

The next royal discovery of this enchanting coast took place in 1910. A hunting party led by Prince Chakrabongse was in pursuit of a deer through the jungle when they came upon a stunning, tranquil beach. The prince was so impressed with the natural beauty of the area that he built a huge summer villa nearby. Chakrabongse Villa stands today in modern Hua Hin.

In 1923, King Vajiravudh fell under the magic spell of Hua Hin's beauty and built a long, teakwood palace at the location where Prince Chakrabongse had pursued the deer. The expansive, beachfront palace was named "The Deer Park" and was connected by long, stencil-cut corridors to the 16 teakwood mansions.

The fame of **Hua Hin** as a summer resort spread quickly in the 1920s and royalty, bankers, and merchants continued to build summer houses there. In 1928, King Phrajadipok completed a new summer palace closer to Hua Hin but "Far From Worries," as its name Klai Kangwon implies. The completion of the railway to Hua Hin and the country's first international golf course and country club kept Kua Hin as Thailand's number one resort for almost 40 years.

It was during the early 1960s that Cha-Am was discovered and began its growth from a small fishing village into a seaside resort. This growth in Hua Hin and Cha-Am all but stopped, however, when the newer, faster-paced Pattaya started luring tourists in the late 1960s. The result is that Hua Hin, Cha-Am, and Prachuab Khiri Khan, still retain the magnetic appeal which lures kings and commoners alike.

Hua Hin is located 170 kms south of Bangkok on the western shore of the Gulf of Thailand. The town is spread along the flat, coastal area with the main highway and rail lines running parallel to the coast. West of the town, the country is hilly with angular limestone peaks. Nestled in this mountainous background are a Karen hilltribe village, a glistening white temple perched precariously on a steep mountainside, and enough limestone caves to satisfy any spelunker.

To the south of Hua Hin, 35 kms. is the rugged terrain and jungle country of Sam Roi Yod National Park. There are several offshore islands at the park and a river leads into the dense interior—the domain of alligators and adventure. These attractions and more are within an hour's traveling distance from Hua Hin and Cha-Am.

During the months from November to April, the shores of Hua Hin and Cha-Am are cooled by the gentle northeast winds. From May to October, the wind is from the opposite, southwest direction, making the 30-km coastline between Hua Hin and Cha-Am quite calm. The average temperature is a comfortable 25 deg. centigrade during the winter and a dry 34 deg. centigrade in the summer months. (Courtesy of *Guide to South Thailand*, 1992.)



Aerial view of Kao Takiab, "Chopstick Mountain."

Answers to last week's Brain Teaser:

All become new words with the addition of PAT at the front: Pathic, Patriot, Pattern, Patten, Patin, Patrolling, Pattles, Patted, Patting, Patrolled.

Brain Teaser

JIGWORD

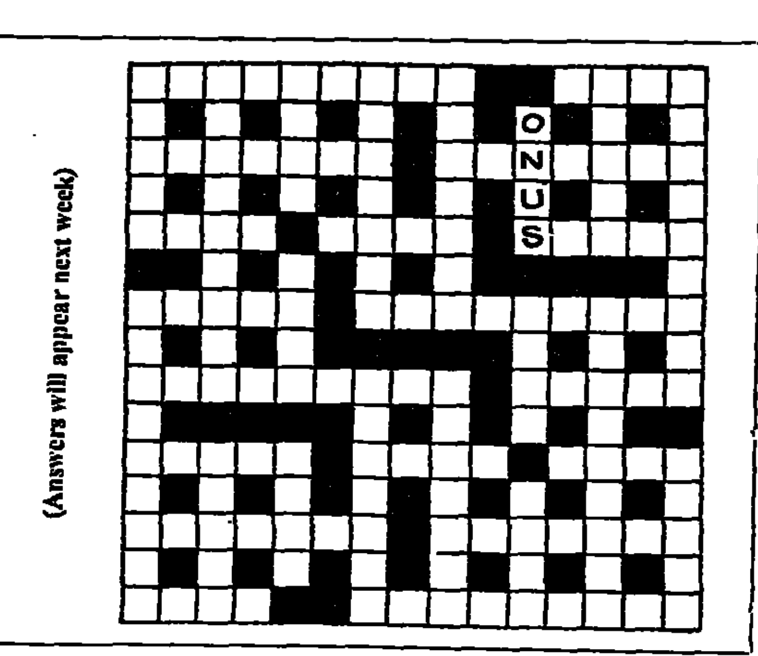
There are no clues here--just answers. Can you fit them? One word is in as a start.

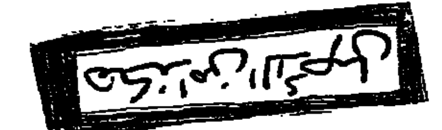
FOUR letters: Boss, card, deed, each, epic, hero, inca, near, need, onus, oral, slav.

FIVE letters: Issue, ladle, opera, prize, rifle, shawl, siege, stern.

SEVEN letters: Concern, emended, enchain, kindled, lanyard, recover, rescind, tackles.

NINE letters: Directing, dismantle, increment, informant, introvert, sinologue, slippered, spinnaker.





TODAY IN HISTORY

1851 — Louis Napoleon crushes workers' rebellion in France.

1893 — British and French reach agreement on Siam (Thailand).

1908 — London naval conference fails to regulate conditions of warfare.

1942 — U.S. bombers strike Italy's mainland for first time in World War II.

1944 — British troops, aided by Greeks, fight in streets of Athens in World War II.

1971 — Indian troops, tanks and planes launch attacks in east Pakistan, and Indian planes hit key airfields in west Pakistan.

1972 — Government of Honduras is overthrown in military coup.

1977 — Iraq walks out on Arab meeting in Tripoli, breaking United Front against Egypt's peace moves with Israel.

1987 — Haiti's Roman Catholic church says it will not comply with ruling junta's request to name new member to provisional electoral council.

1989 — Following his shipboard summit with Mikhail Gorbachev, U.S. President Bush says it is too soon to declare the Cold War over.

1990 — Iraq says it will release 3,000 Soviets still held hostage in that country but wants compensation.

1992 — President Bush orders more than 28,000 U.S. soldiers to Somalia to protect relief efforts.

1993 — Farmers from Europe, India and Japan demonstrated in Geneva against "American imperialism" and the GATT trade accord they fear will ruin millions of farmers and uproot centuries-old traditions.

1994 — Gunmen opened fire on a trendy Stockholm nightclub, killing three people and wounding 21 others. Police believe the killers were seeking revenge after being turned away by the doorman.


Photo: Abbas Kowsari

CANDID CAMERA



TOMORROW IN HISTORY

1944 — Allied troops take Ravenna, Italy, in World War II.

1956 — British and French forces begin withdrawal from Egypt in Suez war. Union of British Togloland and Ghana is approved.

1961 — United Nations forces launch attack in Katanga, the Congo, near Elizabethville.

1962 — United States and Soviet Union agree to cooperate in peaceful uses of outer space.

1971 — Soviet Union, at UN Security Council, vetoes resolution calling for cease-fire in hostilities between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

1977 — Egypt breaks diplomatic relations with five Arab nations which were hostile to President Anwar Sadat's Peace overtures to Israel.

1985 — Britain says it will go through with plans to withdraw form United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

1988 — About 90 cabinet ministers from throughout the world convene in Montreal, Canada, to discuss liberalizing global trade.

1990 — U.S. troops arrest former Panamanian police official after he escapes from prison by helicopter and takes over national police headquarters.

1992 Military officials say the logistics of operation restore hope in Somalia will be one of the toughest ever attempted.

1990 — Prime Minister V. P. Singh's Party splits leaving Indian government in disarray.

1991 — Billionaire publisher Robert Maxwell is found dead in waters off Canary Islands where his yacht had been cruising.

1992 — UN official say former rebel leader Jonas Savimbi will do "everything possible" to free 75 Russians and 13 Brazilians captured by his rebels east of Luanda.

1993 — Talks on restoring ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power collapse in Haiti, when military representatives fail to attend.

1994 — Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan discloses he has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

DECEMBER

December (from Lat. *decem*, "ten"), 12th month of the modern Christian year, having 31 days. Originally the Roman calendar had only ten months. It is the month of the winter solstice, and was called Winter month by the Anglo-Saxons, later Holy month, in reference to the Christian celebration of the birth of Christ.



A representation of "December," Amiens Cathedral, France, shows a peasant salting provisions for the winter.

Short Story

The Blue Bouquet

Octavio Paz

I woke covered with sweat. Hot steam rose from the newly sprayed, red-brick pavement. A gray-winged butterfly, dazzled, circled the yellow light. I jumped from my hammock and crossed the room barefoot, careful not to step on some scorpion leaving his hideout for a bit of fresh air. I went to the little window and inhaled the country air. One could hear the breathing of the night, feminine, enormous. I returned to the center of the room, emptied water from a jar into a pewter basin, and wet my towel. I rubbed my chest and legs with the soaked cloth, dried myself a little, and, making sure that no bugs were hidden in the folds of my clothes, got dressed. I ran down the green stairway. At the door of the boardinghouse I bumped into the owner, a one-eyed taciturn fellow. Sitting on a wicker stool, he smoked, his eye half closed. In a hoarse voice, he asked:

"Where are you going?"

"To take a walk. It's too hot."

"Humm — everything's closed. And no streetlights around here. You'd better stay out."

I shrugged my shoulders, muttered "back soon," and plunged into the darkness. At first I couldn't see anything. I tumbled along the cobblestone street. I lit a cigarette. Suddenly the moon appeared from behind a black cloud, lighting a white wall that was crumbled in places. I stopped, blinded by such whiteness. Wind whistled slightly. I breathed the air of the tamarinds. The night hummed, full of leaves and insects. Crickets bivouacked in the tall grass. I raised my head: up there the stars too had set up camp. I thought that the universe was a vast system or signs, a conversation between giant beings. My actions, the cricket's saw, the star's blink, were nothing but pauses and syllables, scattered phrases from that dialog. What word could it be of which I was only a syllable? Who speaks the word? To whom is it spoken? I threw my cigarette down on the sidewalk falling it drew a shining curve, shooting out brief sparks like a tiny comet.

I walked a long time, slowly I felt free, secure between the lips that were at that moment speaking me with such happiness. The night was a garden of eyes. As I crossed the street, I heard someone come out of a doorway. I turned around, but could not distinguish anything. I hurried on. A few moments later I heard the dull shuffle of sandals on the hot stone. I didn't want to turn around, although I felt the shadow getting closer with every step. I tried to run. I couldn't. Suddenly I stopped short. Before I could defend myself, I felt the point of knife in my back, and a sweet voice:

"Don't move, mister, or I'll stick it in."

Without turning, I asked:

"What do you want?"

"Your eyes, mister," answered the soft, almost painful voice.

"My eyes? What do you want with my eyes? Look, I've got some money. Not much, but it's something. I'll give you everything I have if you let me go. Don't kill me."

"Don't be afraid, mister. I won't kill you. I'm only going to take your eyes."

"But why do you want my eyes?" I asked again.

"My friend has this whim. She wants a bouquet of blue eyes. And around here they're hard to find."

"My eyes won't help you. They're brown, not blue."

Don't try to fool me, mister. I know very well that yours are blue."

"Don't take the eyes of a fellow man. I'll give you something else."

"Don't play saint with me," he said harshly. "Turn around."

I turned. He was small and fragile. His palm sombrero covered half his face. In his right hand he held a country machete that shone in the moonlight.

"Let me see your face."

I struck a matchete and put it close to my face. The brightness made me squint. He opened my eyelids with a firm hand. He couldn't see very well. Standing on tiptoe, he stared at me intensely. The flame burned my fingers. I dropped it. A silent moment passed.

"Are you convinced now? They're not blue."

"Pretty clever, aren't you?" he answered. "Let's see. Light another one."

I struck another match, and put it near my eyes. Grabbing my sleeve, he ordered:

"Kneel down."

I knelt. With one hand he grabbed me by the hair, pulling my head back. He bent over me, curious and tense, while his matches slowly dropped until grazed my eyelids. I closed my eyes.

"Keep them open," he ordered.

"Kneel down."

I knelt. With one hand he grabbed me by the hair, pulling my head back. He bent over me, curious and tense, while his matchete slowly dropped until it grazed my eyelids. I closed my eyes.

"Keep them open," he ordered.

I opened my eyes. The flame burned my lashes. All of a sudden he let me go.

"All right, they're not blue. Beat it."

He vanished. I leaned against the wall, my head in my hands. I pulled myself together. Stumbling, falling, trying to get up again. I ran for an hour through the deserted town. When I got to the plaza, I saw the owner of the boardinghouse, still sitting in the front of the door. I went in without saying a word. The next day I left town.